



Institute for
**Public Safety
Crime and Justice**

**Evaluation of the Use of the Good Loaf
as an Out of Court Disposal Option for
women who have offended:
September 2021- August 2023**

Authors:

Kathryn Cahalin

Professor Matthew Callender

Joanna Binley

Lexine Smyth

October 2023

Executive Summary

- In this evaluation period, September 2021 to August 2023, the police recorded that they had made 78 Out of Court Disposal (OCD) referrals to The Good Loaf, 55 were made in the first year of the evaluation period and only 23 in the second year. This highlights a notable reduction in the use of The Good Loaf as an OCD option. In the previous 2-year evaluation period (April 2019 to the end of March 2021) there were 84 referrals to the Good Loaf which is slightly higher. This is very important to note as the previous period included Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions when activities were seriously impacted.
- According to police data the use of all conditional cautions has shown a slight downward trend over the evaluation period. On average 74 were issued per month in the period September 2021 to August 2022 compared to 68 per month in September 2022 to August 2023. It appears that there has been a fall in the proportion of conditional cautions the Good Loaf referral constitutes of all conditional cautions in this evaluation period compared to last. In this evaluation period, The Good Loaf has been a component in 4% of Conditional Cautions issued compared 7% of Conditional Cautions issued in the previous evaluation period. The Good Loaf is specific to women and so it is important to note that this analysis does not take into consideration the proportionality of males and females that were issued conditional cautions in each time period.
- According to police data, 83% (64) of 78 cases were recorded as having complied with The Good Loaf OCD, whilst 17% (13) were recorded as having breached¹. According to data provided by The Good Loaf, there were 80 cases in this period, of which 5 were closed or withdrawn by the police, one woman was still on the programme and one of the women died. Of the remaining 73, 15 were recorded as having breached and 58 were recorded as having successfully completed the OCD, giving a slightly lower compliance rate of 79%.
- Most women referred were white (95%, 74) and their age ranged between 18 and 63, with the average age being 34 years. Over half (57%, 47) were 35 and under. Almost half of women (47%, 37) were from Northampton, followed by 14% (11) from Kettering and 11% (9) from Corby. There were a couple of cases that were recorded as living out of County in Bedfordshire. The most common offence type was assault, accounting for 47% of offences listed (43). The second most common types of offences were theft/ burglary/ fraud (12%, 9) and child neglect (12%, 9).
- In this evaluation period, half of women (52%, 36) attended the wellbeing programme, 35% (24) of women attended the work/ employability programme and the remaining 13% (9) attended the Safer Relationships Programme. This is a slightly different breakdown to the previous evaluation period when nearly two-thirds of women (64%, 47) attended the wellbeing programme. This was because the wellbeing programme was developed by The Good Loaf during Covid-19 as the employability and domestic abuse programmes were not able to run for much of this period and all women from September 2020 were placed on the wellbeing programme. Therefore, a lower proportion attended the employability programme (9%, 7) and a domestic abuse programme (9%, 7) in the last evaluation period.
- For all three programmes, participants completed pre and post surveys which included measures of their resilience, wellbeing and self-esteem. Pre- measures of women referred to

¹ One case was still outstanding and therefore had neither completed or breached.

the programmes suggest that they tend to have lower than average resilience, wellbeing and self-esteem than would be expected in the population².

- **Resilience** was measured using the Brief Resilience Scale (Smith *et al.* 2008) - Across 20 cases that had pre and post scores, the average pre-score was 2.89 (which falls into the 'low resilience' category) and the average post score was 3.32 (which falls into the 'medium resilience category'), meaning that the average improvement in scores pre to post was +0.42. This replicates findings from the previous evaluation period in which there were 28 cases with BRS pre and post scores and the average pre-score was 2.83 whereas the average post score was 3.3, meaning there was an average improvement of +0.47. Therefore, collating the data across the two evaluations 48 cases had pre and post BRS measures, the average pre score was 2.85 (low resilience) and the average post score was 3.3 (medium resilience). Therefore, the average change in BRS score was +0.5, a positive improvement. When looking at women's pre score those that started with low resilience saw the highest average increase in their resilience (+0.86), compared to only 0.008 for those that already had medium resilience to start with and for the one case that had high resilience to start with. All programmes saw an average improvement in resilience across the evaluation periods with women on the wellbeing programme, seeing the most pronounced average improvement (+0.53).
- **Wellbeing** was measured using the *Short Warwick Edinburgh Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS)* - Across 21 cases with pre and post scores the average pre-score was 19.96 (the lower end of what would be classed as 'medium wellbeing') and the average post score was 23.41 (the middle range of what would be classed as 'medium wellbeing'), meaning that the average improvement in scores pre to post was 8.44. Two thirds (14, 66%) of women saw an increase in their SWEMWBS score. When looking at women's pre score women that started with low wellbeing saw the highest average increase in their wellbeing (6.09), compared to only 0.54 of those that already had medium wellbeing. Comparing the data in this evaluation period to the previous evaluation the findings are similar for wellbeing although in the previous evaluation the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale (WEMWBS) was used. In the first evaluation there were 30 cases with WEMWBS pre and post scores. In this sample the average pre-score was 45.57 whereas the average post score was 51.87, meaning there was an average improvement in WEMWBS scores of 6.3. In most cases (23, 77%) women saw an increase/improvement in their WEMWBS score. All programmes saw an average improvement in wellbeing across the evaluation periods with the work programme, seeing the most pronounced average improvement in both evaluation periods.
- **Self-esteem** was measured using the *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)*. Across 18 cases the average pre-score was 16.5 and the average post score was 19.7, representing an average increase pre to post of 3.2. In just under three quarters of cases (72%,13) women saw an increase/ improvement in their RSES score. In the first evaluation there were 31 cases with RSES pre and post scores. In this sample the average pre-score was 15.5 whereas the average post score was 19.5, meaning there was an average improvement in BRS scores of 4.03. In most cases (77%, 24) women saw an increase/ improvement in their BRS score, 13% (4) saw a reduction and 10% (3) saw no change. Therefore, collating the data across the two evaluations 49 cases had pre and post RSES measures, the average pre score was 15.88 and the average post score was 19.59. When looking at women's pre score women that started with low self-

² There were 46 cases with pre scores on the Brief Resilience Scale and the average score was 2.69 which would be classed as 'low resilience' whereas Smith *et al.* (2013) in a population of 844 found an average score of 3.707 which would be classed as 'medium resilience'. 47 participants had SWEMWBS pre scores with the average score being 19.38, this compares to an average of 23.45 for women in the East Midlands (Ng Fat, L. *et al.* 2016)

esteem saw the highest average increase in their self-esteem (4.4), compared to 3.24 for those that would not have been classed as having low self-esteem. Women on all programmes saw an average improvement in self-esteem across the evaluation periods with the domestic abuse and wellbeing programmes seeing the most pronounced average improvement (+4.0 and +3.96 respectively).

- As part of the evaluation women on the programmes were interviewed about their experiences as well as being asked open-ended questions as part of the pre and post surveys. Prior to the programme women were asked how they felt about attending The Good Loaf, on the whole women had a positive outlook with two thirds (66%) indicating that they thought the programme would be 'very useful' or 'useful' in meeting their needs. A further 22% indicated that they thought it would be 'fairly useful', with this group making comments that tended to suggest that they were open to the possibility of gaining something positive from it rather than specifying something specific they thought they would gain out of it. Most women expressed some sort of reservation about attending, with being in a group setting or meeting new people being the most frequent concerns identified, which replicates findings from the previous evaluation. A couple expressed concerns due to mental health issues whilst other expressed concern relating to implications for family, work and travel.
- Women were asked about whether the police described the Out of Court Disposal Option to them and what would happen next. In most cases women said that it had been explained to them. However, as with the previous evaluation, some women were not sure if it had been explained fully by the police and they only understood what it was when they were contacted by The Good Loaf. Often women highlighted that they were in a very distressed state when they were arrested, often concerned for the welfare of dependents and therefore, found it difficult to absorb the information given by the police. A couple of women talked about having felt that they had been misinformed by the police of the format of the programme and what the programme was about. Additionally, a couple of women interviewed commented that they believed that they had been verbally and physically mistreated by the police. This was reported to the Commissioner during the project.
- Following the programme, most women indicated that the programme was 'very useful' (9, 36%) or 'useful' (9, 36%) with a further 16% (4) classifying it as 'fairly useful'. Only 2 women classed it as 'not very useful' and 1 as 'not at all useful'. The key theme of these women related to the relevancy of the programme to the reason for their referral and relevance of the programmes was also mentioned by a couple of women that did class the programme as useful. In addition, the most common suggested improvement to the use of The Good Loaf as an OOC was to increase the relevancy of the programme to individual needs and the reason why women were referred to The Good Loaf.
- Some women spoke of struggling with the group setting, either finding it difficult to relate to others and their stories or in terms of the extent to which others engaged with the group. One woman felt that there needed to be stricter rules around the use of mobile phones. Another woman felt that one to one work would have been much more beneficial for her as she found it difficult to relate to the experiences of others and didn't feel she could put forward her story. A couple of women suggested that it would be useful if there was follow-up after the programme had finished to check whether any further support was needed rather than all support potentially falling away.
- Women were asked to rate whether the programme had changed how they think or act in any way. 4 (16%) said 'a lot', 7 (28%) said 'quite a lot', 11 (44%) said 'a little' and 3 (12%) said not

at all. One woman described the programme as having changed her life in combination with her also attending Alcoholics Anonymous which she had arranged herself. Others commented that it changed their understanding of what healthy relationships are, how to avoid negative situations, coping and emotional regulation strategies, to think before they act and practical skills such as finances and health eating.

- It would not be expected, or not necessarily intended, that all women that went on the OOOD at The Good Loaf would have continued contact with The Good Loaf on completing their required sessions. Women may not need further support and/ or have commitments such as work, family and children that make future contact difficult. However, the responses from women show that some did intend to continue contact and receive further support through attending courses, volunteering or receiving support with issues such as accommodation. Additionally, comments suggest that women know that The Good Loaf is somewhere that they can return to in the future, if they are not quite in the right place yet to engage further with The Good Loaf.

In summary, both evaluations of The Good Loaf OOOD have demonstrated positive benefits for women in terms of building resilience, self-esteem and wellbeing especially for those that have low levels to begin with. In addition, on the whole women were positive about the programmes with stated benefits including increasing their understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviour, increasing their confidence, changing how they perceive and respond to situations and learning new skills such as cv writing and budgeting. The evidence presented in this report sets out areas to further strengthen this provision within Northamptonshire to benefit women with a strategic aim of reducing reoffending. The recommendations and rationale for each are contained in section 6 but are also listed below.

Recommendations:

1. It is important that the decreased utilisation of The Good Loaf as an Out of Court Disposal Option for women is explored and establishing what the reasons for its decline are so that they can be addressed.
2. It is recommended that the processes by which women are assigned to specific OOOD providers based on individual needs is reviewed as well as the processes to identify the *right* intervention/support by providers allocated.
3. It would be beneficial to complete a strategic needs assessment that maps the needs of the women and the service provision landscape to identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities to address underlying causes of offending behaviours.
4. It would be valuable that the police review the information women are given regarding the OOOD and how and when that information is delivered, so they fully understand what they are agreeing to. In addition, women need to be provided information about how they can make a complaint about the police if they feel that they have been mistreated.
5. The availability of specific mental health support to women with mental health needs should be assessed.
6. It is important that neurodiverse needs are considered both by the police when interacting with women at the point of referral and by The Good Loaf in terms of ensuring that engagement and outcomes can be maximised for this group.
7. It may be beneficial for The Good Loaf to review access to one-to-one support or access to speaking on a one-to-one basis regarding any concerns or to reflect on discussions that they found difficult to comprehend and process in the group setting.

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1. Introduction

Women within the Criminal Justice System are recognised as being some of the most vulnerable people in society. Female offenders on average have a higher prevalence of complex needs than their male counterparts. More than half (53%) have experienced emotional, physical or psychological abuse as a child (Williams *et al.*, 2012) and 57% of women prisoner's report having experienced domestic violence (Prison Reform Trust, 2017). Research by Light *et al.* (2013) found that women were twice as likely to suffer from depression at 65% compared to 37% of male prisoners, are more than twice as likely to report needing help for mental health problems (49% compared with 18% of male prisoners) and are more likely to report symptoms indicative of psychosis (25% compared with 15%). The rate of self-harm in the female prison estate is over six times higher than in the male estate (Ministry of Justice, 2022). Evidence suggests that the factors that can lead to men and women to commit crime, and to reoffend, can vary significantly as can the way in which women respond to interventions (Corston, 2007) and that tailoring interventions to the specific criminogenic needs of women can be more effective than applying a non-gender specific approach (NOMS, 2015).

The Government's Female Offender Strategy (2018) emphasised that females are less likely to be violent offenders, more often committing low-level offences. The strategy highlights that over three quarters of women sentenced to custody receive sentences of fewer than 12 months and the reoffending rate within a year for this cohort is 71%. Due to fewer women's prisons in England and Wales, females given custodial sentences are often housed in prison estates further from their homes, families and support networks. This is a significant concern as females are also more likely to be sole or primary caregivers for children which is likely to cause more significant suffering for both female offenders and their children from being deprived of sustained contact (MOJ, 2015; Roberts and Watson, 2017). Indeed, the Government's Female Offender Strategy (2018) argued that short sentences offer a limited level of public protection or any real time for rehabilitative activity, and can aggravate vulnerabilities in female offenders, indirectly raising the risk of reoffending through housing, employment and familial instability.

Therefore, a key component of the Female Offender Strategy is to reduce the female prison population, with fewer sent to custody for short periods, shifting the emphasis to community orders and/or diversion into community support which directly tackle the causes of offending. A key mechanism advocated by the Female Offender Strategy is the use of Out of Court Disposals (OOC) which enables the low-level offending to be dealt with proportionately without recourse to the courts, but which are not simply warnings but address the underlying causes of offending. To explore the potential of this mechanism, the Ministry of Justice piloted an OOC framework in three police forces (West Yorkshire, Staffordshire and Leicestershire) in 2014-15 that emphasised reforming offenders. Some of these pilot areas also referred female offenders to women's centres to address their offending behaviour alongside their OOC.

There are some positive findings in relation to female specific OOC options, for example, an evaluation of a women specific condition pilot in Merseyside and West Yorkshire found that women on the programme were positive about it as it responded to their needs and helped positively change their personal and emotional circumstances. Specifically reported positive components by the female offenders interviewed included that they were provided the space to reflect on their situation, talk and be heard, and develop personal strength and skills (Easton *et al.* 2010). Easton *et al.* (2010) concluded that there were a wide range of benefits experienced by the female offenders; *"increased self-esteem/confidence; increasing socialising and reducing levels of social isolation; reducing/stopping drinking; accepting mental health support; and moving into more settled accommodation"* (p.30). A diversion trial in Hull diverted arrestees to a women's centre for assistance to address their criminogenic needs, in their study of the trial Brennan *et al.* (2016) found the rearrest rate was 13.64%

for women referred on to the intervention compared to 25.44% for women who were processed through the criminal justice system as usual. It has also been found that the provision of strong female group contact and community support is fundamental to developing and sustaining women's commitment to a non-offending lifestyle (Gelsthorpe *et al.*, 2007).

In this context, in 2019 the Northamptonshire Office for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) and The Good Loaf, which is a social enterprise that provides programmes and opportunities for women, secured funding from the Ministry of Justice via the Female Offender Strategy to implement an OOCd option specifically for women. The Good Loaf is a community bakery supplying freshly baked products to businesses across Northamptonshire on a wholesale basis, as well as operating three cafes serving the public. Although, the Cafés are open to anyone as customers, The Good Loaf is a women specific environment, with all staff and volunteers being women. Therefore, from March 2019, Northamptonshire police could issue a conditional caution to women that have been involved in low level offending³. As part of the condition women are required to attend 4 sessions with The Good Loaf on one of their programmes that are designed to help tackle the cycle of unemployment, offending and poverty. On receiving the referral, The Good Loaf carry out an assessment of the women's needs and allocate the woman to the appropriate intervention or course. The three main programmes are:

The Work Programme – The Work Programme is 6 weeks long. The programme focuses on CV writing, interview skills, career pathways and confidence building, together with volunteering in The Good Loaf café to provide all-round input to support a return to work. The programme is run by the Workers Education Alliance (WEA)

The Safer Relationships Programme – The safer relationships programme is 6 weeks long. On the programme women learn to understand what aspects of a relationship are unhealthy and /or abusive and how to build safe boundaries – as well as how to develop a healthy relationship, reflect on achievements and work towards positive future choices.

The Wellbeing programme – The wellbeing programme is 5 weeks long and aims to improve mental health. It involves discussion and interactive activities surrounding 10 key areas of wellbeing. It aims to help participants build their confidence while better understanding who they are and what lifts their spirits.

From the start of the introduction of the OOCd Option to March 2021 an evaluation on the scheme was conducted by the Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice (IPSCJ) on behalf of the OPFCC and The Good Loaf. This study pointed to some positive benefits of the use of the Good Loaf as an OOCd, with most women showing a positive increase in their wellbeing, resilience and self-esteem and self-reporting that the experience had increased their confidence, enabled them to understand and regulate their emotions and behaviours better, improve relationships and skills. Approximately, 85% of the women that were issued an OOCd to The Good Loaf completed it. However, the evaluation was hampered to a degree because the use of The Good Loaf made a slow start and then was interrupted by Covid-19, which affected both numbers of women going through the programme but also the type of interventions The Good Loaf could offer women. Therefore, the OPFCC commissioned this further evaluation of the programme which ran from September 2021 to August 2023. This report looks at the data from this evaluation in relation to the data from the previous evaluation to provide a more robust understanding of the use of The Good Loaf as an OOCd, both from the perspective of an increased sample size but additionally evaluating it in a time where a 'normal service' has resumed.

³ A Conditional Caution is issued if the offender admits the offence and accepts the condition(s). If the conditions are complied with or completed within the timescales determined, the case is finalised and there is no prosecution. If, however, the conditions are not complied with, a prosecution may follow.

2. Methods

This report provides the findings on quantitative and qualitative data collected in relation to the use of the OOCs with women. The data collected has included:

1. **Process data** – Data has been provided by both The Good Loaf and the police on the referral, and progress, of cases via the OOC option (see section 3)
2. **Pre and post measures surveys** - To measure whether there have been changes in the women's resilience, wellbeing and self-esteem the women are asked to complete three measurement scales at the start of the programme (pre-measures) and at the end (post measures). The scales are:
 - **The Brief Resilience Scale (BRS)⁴** - The Brief Resilience Scale was created to assess the perceived ability to bounce back or recover from stress. The scale was developed to assess a unitary construct of resilience, including both positively and negatively worded items. The BRS score interpretation is 1.00-2.99 (Low resilience), 3-4.30 (medium resilience) and 4.31-5.00 (high resilience).
 - **The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale (SWEMWBS)⁵** – The Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) is a short version of the Warwick– Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS). The WEMWBS was developed to enable the monitoring of mental wellbeing in the general population and the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing. The SWEMWBS uses 7 of the WEMWBS's 14 statements about thoughts and feelings, which relate more to functioning than feelings and so offer a slightly different perspective on mental wellbeing. Higher scores indicate higher levels of mental wellbeing with the highest possible score being 35.
 - **The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)⁶** - The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) is a self-esteem measure widely used in social-science research. It uses a scale of 0–30 where a score less than 15 may indicate problematic low self- esteem.

This data is reported in section 4. These surveys also captured qualitative information about the women's expectations for the programme (pre-surveys) and what they felt they gained from involvement in the programme and what they think could be improved (post surveys). This information is contained within section 5.

3. **Interviews with women that had participated in the programmes** - 21 interviews were conducted with women at the end of their participation in programmes. Two of the women had completed the safer relationships programme, 8 had completed the wellbeing programme and 11 had completed the work programme. In most cases these were conducted as part of the post surveys as the University of Northampton took over the administration of the post surveys from The Good Loaf in April 2022 due to resourcing issues. This information is contained within section 5.

⁴ Smith, B. W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P., & Bernard, J. (2008). *The brief resilience scale: assessing the ability to bounce back*. International journal of behavioral medicine, 15(3), 194-200

⁵ Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) © NHS Health Scotland, University of Warwick and University of Edinburgh, 2008, all rights reserved.

⁶ Rosenberg, Morris. 1989. Society and the Adolescent Self-Image. Revised edition

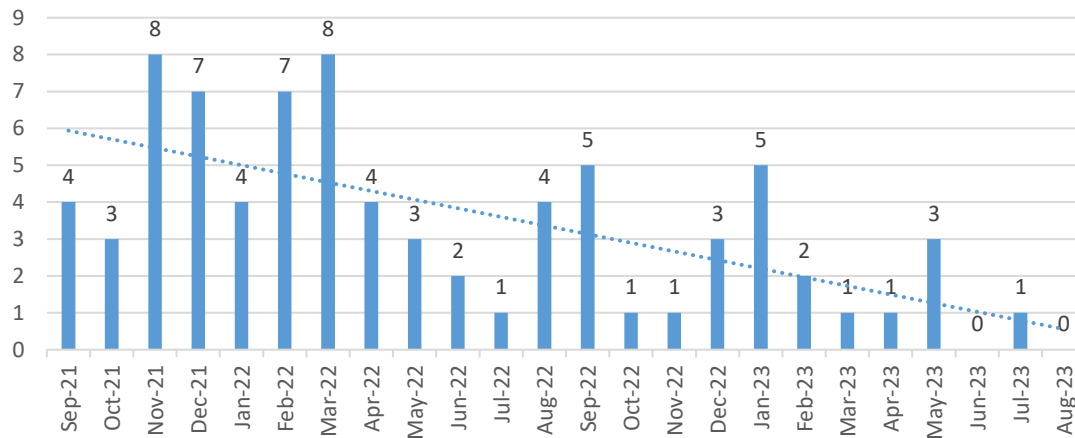
3. Process Data

Anonymised data on the OOC cases referred to The Good Loaf was provided by both the OOC supervisor in Northamptonshire Police and by The Good Loaf.

3.1 Number and Pattern of Referrals

Since September 2021 to the end of August 2023, the police had recorded 78 referrals to the Good Loaf as an OOC. The below graph shows the number of OOCs to the Good Loaf by month and indicates that there has been a downward trend in referrals over the evaluation period. In the first year September 2021 to August 2022 there were 55 referrals made compared to only 23 in the second year of the evaluation. In the previous evaluation period (April 2019 to the end of March 21) there were 84 referrals to the Good Loaf which is 6 more than in the current evaluation. This is important to note as the previous period included Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions when activities were seriously impacted.

Figure 3.1 Number of Good Loaf Out of Court Disposals issued by month.



The use of The Good Loaf as a conditional caution, is one option amongst a suite of conditional caution options available. The figure below shows that over the last two years the number of all conditional cautions overall has ranged between 46 and 88 over the evaluation period, remaining fairly stable with a slight downward trend. On average 74 were issued per month in the period September 2021 to August 2022 compared to 68 per month in September 2022 to August 2023

Figure 3.2 Number of Conditional Cautions issued by month from September 2021 to August 23.

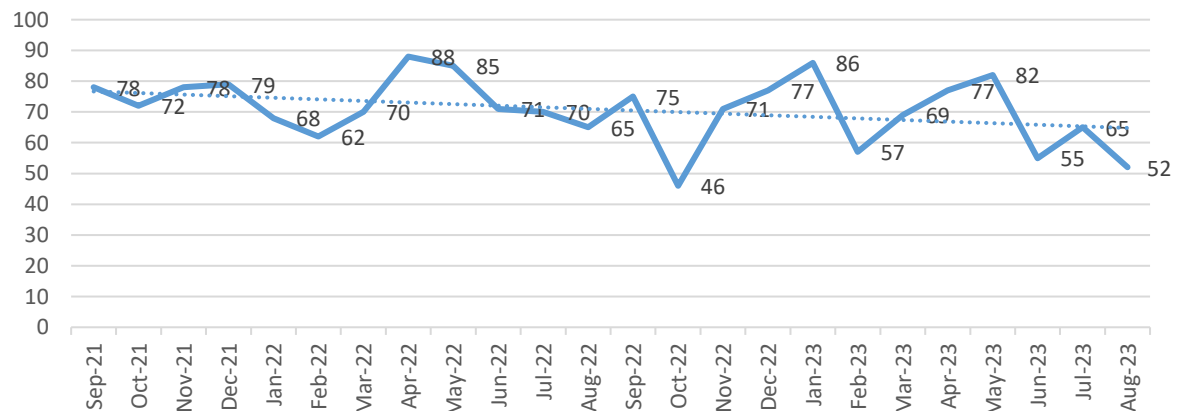
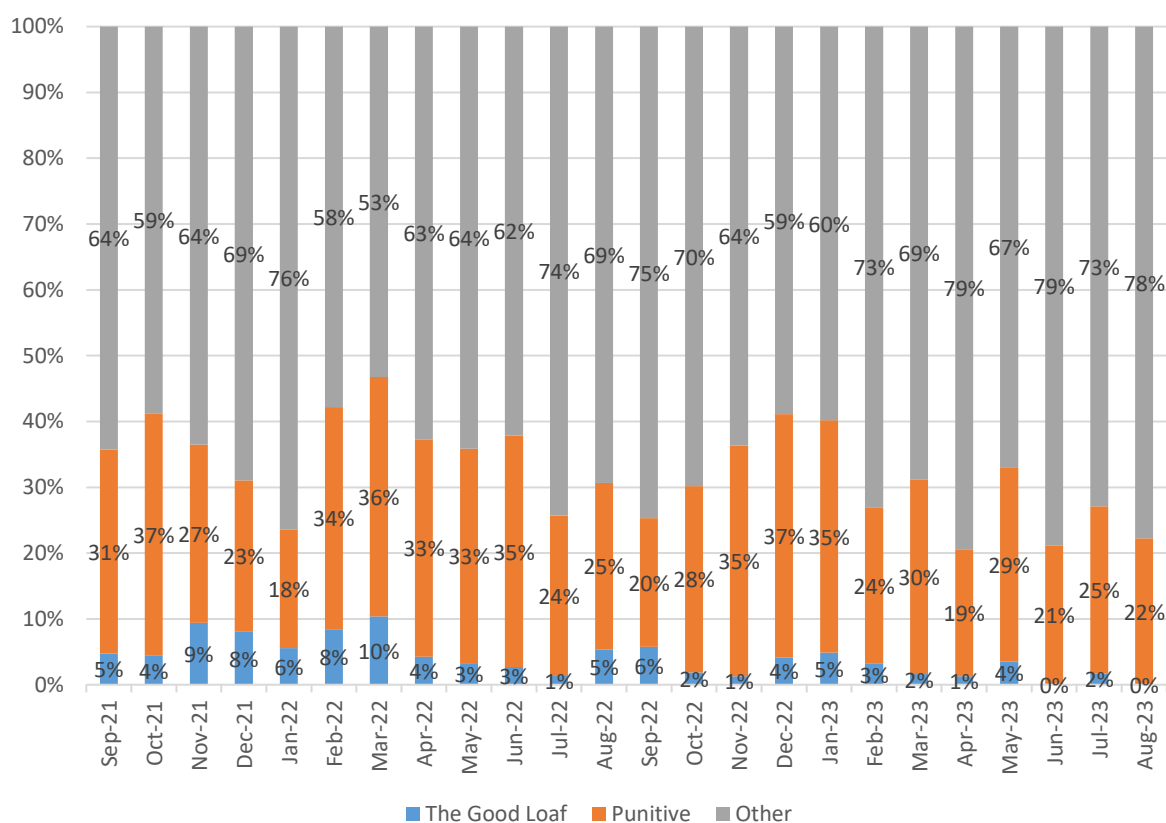


Figure 3.3 shows the proportion of conditional cautions by whether they were punitive (e.g., compensation, fine or charity donation), whether they were the use of The Good Loaf or whether they were to another intervention. The graph shows that in this evaluation period the highest proportion that The Good Loaf has constituted in any one month has been 10% and since February 2023 it has remained below 5% of Conditional Cautions. Over the entire evaluation period, the Good Loaf has been a component in 4% of Conditional Cautions issued, which is a reduction to the previous evaluation period which ran from March 2019-2021 in which The Good Loaf constituted 7% of Conditional Cautions issued. The Good Loaf is specific to women and so it is important to note that this analysis does not take into consideration the proportionality of males and females that were issued conditional cautions in this time period.

Figure 3.3 The proportion of conditional cautions that are The Good Loaf, another intervention or Punitive measures September 2021-August 2023



3.2 Completion Rate and Breaches

According to police records in the period Sept 2021 to Aug 23, 83% (64) of cases were recorded as having complied⁷. According to the police, 13 cases had 'breached' in the evaluation period.

Seven of those that breached were prosecuted. One of these received an absolute discharge and 4 received conditional discharges. Those that received conditional discharges also were ordered to pay CPS costs and a victim surcharge. One of these was also given a community order and ordered to complete unpaid work. One individual was not recorded as having a conditional discharge but was

⁷ One case was recorded as being outstanding and therefore had neither completed or breached.

fined, had to pay CPS costs and a victim surcharge. The final one who was prosecuted was remanded on unconditional bail and was awaiting their next court date.

Five of those that breached were not prosecuted. For two of these cases the reason for no prosecution was 'out of time'. For one the reason given were 'insufficient evidence', another the reason recorded was 'no reasonable prospect of conviction' and for the final case the reason recorded was 'CPS decision – no victim support'.

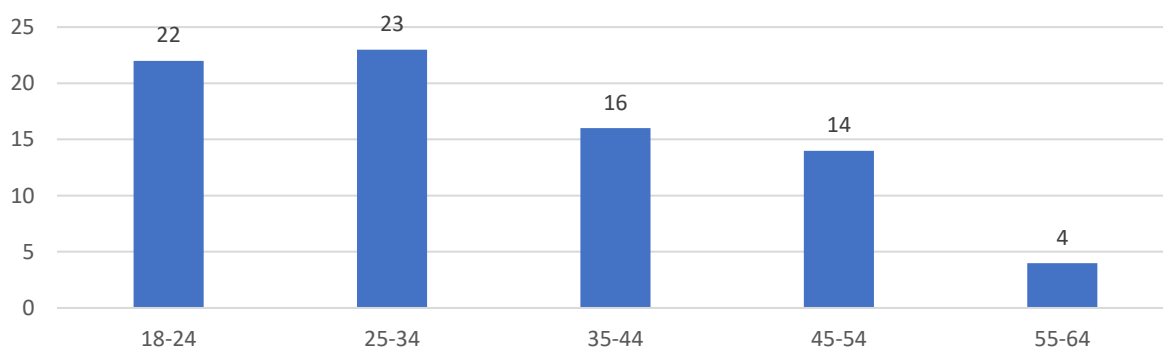
The final breach was recorded as the 'court dated and were awaiting the outcome' so currently unknown if they had been prosecuted or not.

According to data provided by The Good Loaf, there were 80 cases in the evaluation period, of which 5 were closed or withdrawn by the police, one woman was still on the programme and one of the women died. Of the remaining 73, 15 were recorded as having breached and 58 were recorded as having successfully completed the OOC, giving a slightly lower compliance rate of 79%.

3.3 Demographics, Geography and Offence Type

Of those for who ethnicity was stated⁸, 95% (74) were 'white', 1% (1) were of mixed heritage, 1% (1) was 'Asian' and 3% (2) were 'black'. Women ranged in age between 18 and 63 with the average age of women being 34, over half (57%, 47) were 35 or under.

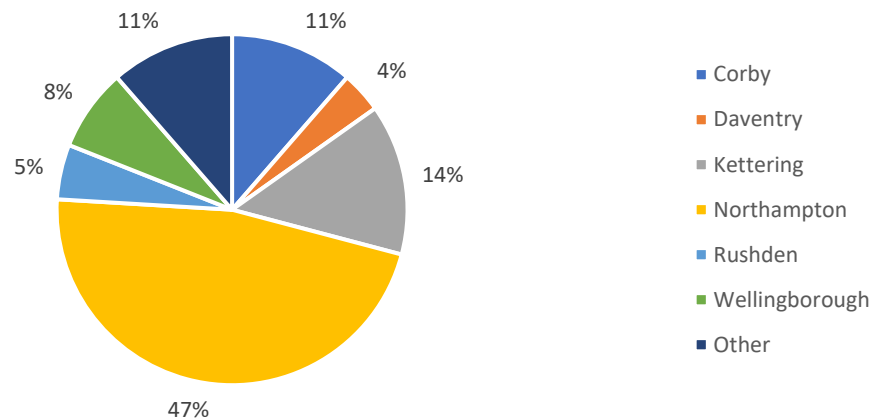
Figure 3.4 The age of women on OOCs at the Good Loaf



In terms of location, 54% (42) were issued in Northampton and 46% (36) in Kettering. In terms of where women who were issued with an OOC to The Good Loaf lived, just under half were from Northampton (47%, 37) followed by 14% (11) from Kettering and 11% (9) from Corby. Those contained in 'other' (11%, 9) were from Blisworth, Brackley, Crick, Desborough, Finedon, Market Harborough, Towcester, Bedfordshire and Luton.

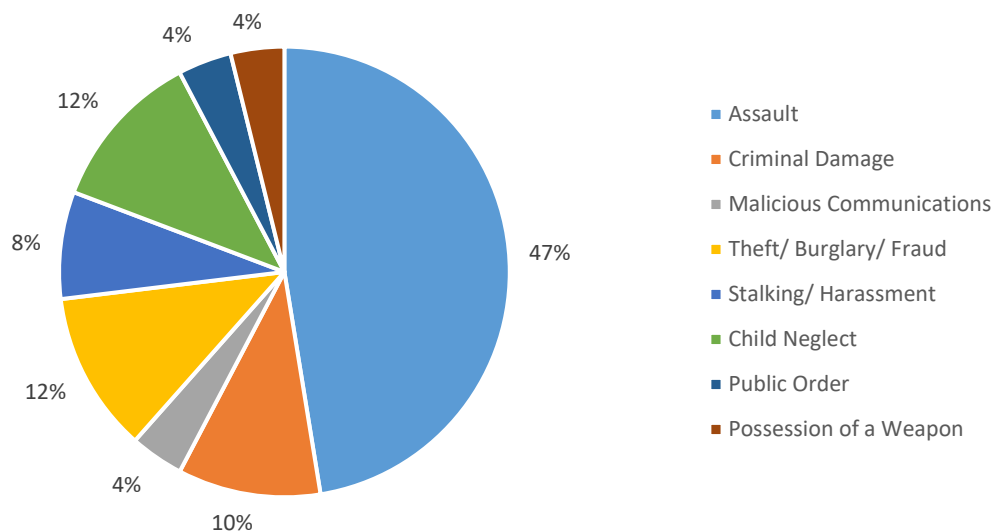
⁸ In 2 cases ethnicity was blank or recorded as 'not stated'.

Figure 3.5 Geographical spread of where women on OOAD at The Good Loaf lived.



By far the most common offence listed was assault accounting for 47% of offences listed (37), which was also the case in the previous evaluation period (47%, 43). Figure 3.6 shows a breakdown of the offence types. The second most common types of offences were theft/ burglary/ fraud (12%, 9) and child neglect (12%, 9). In the previous evaluation period, the second most common offence type was threats/ malicious communications/ harassment (15%, 14) whilst the third most common was child neglect (11%, 10).

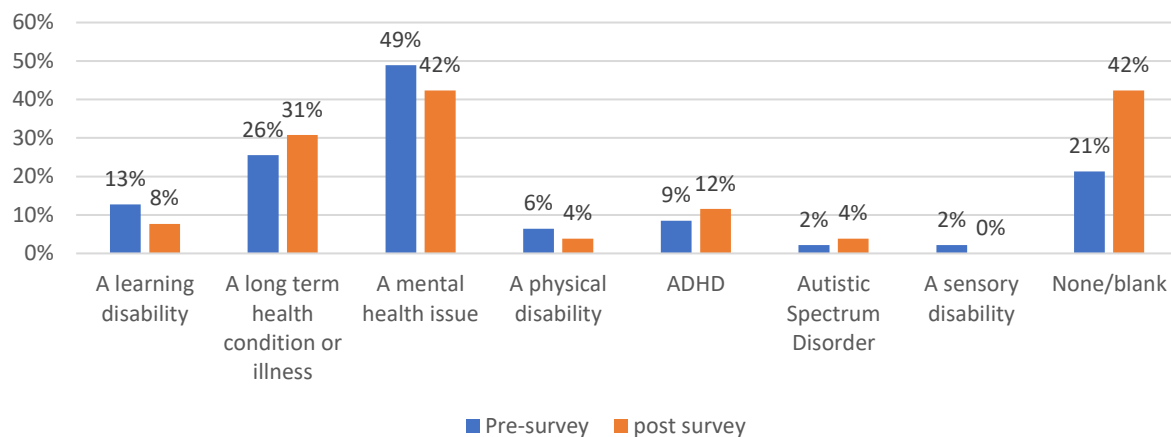
Figure 3.6 Category of offences that women had committed who received an OOAD to The Good Loaf



Although data were not provided in the process data on disabilities and health, within the pre and post surveys women were asked whether they have any of the following: A physical disability, a sensory disability, a learning disability, a long-term health condition or illness, a mental health issue, ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, none, prefer not to say and other. Women could select as many options as necessary to this question. The figure below shows the proportion of women that selected each for both pre and post surveys. It shows that nearly half of women in the pre surveys (49%, 23) identified that they had a mental health issue, about a quarter (26%, 12) had a long-term health condition and

(17%, 8) could be classed as neurodiverse⁹. About a fifth (21%, 10) of those that completed the pre surveys selected 'none' or left the question blank. In the post surveys, a higher proportion of women selected 'none' or left the question blank (42%, 11), this is worthy of note as it may reflect that a lower proportion of women with physical health, mental health or neurodiverse needs complete the intervention and/ or engaged with the evaluation process. Recording of additional needs in terms of physical and mental health, disability and neurodiversity as part of the programme may be beneficial in terms of whether this is a contributory factor to completion.

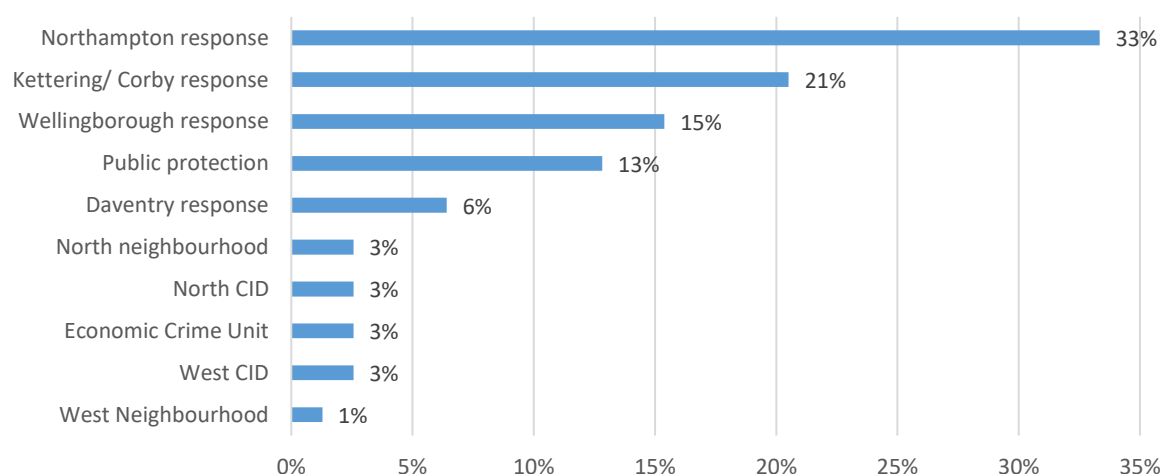
Figure 3.7 Proportion of sample that self-identified health condition or disability in pre and post surveys



3.4 Origin of the Out of Court of Disposal Referral from the Police

Figure 3.8 shows that most commonly the OOCDO option has been utilised by the response teams (69%) followed by the public protection team (13%). This is similar to the previous evaluation period (April 2019 to the end of March 21) where response teams issued 62% of Good Loaf OOCDO and the public protection team issued 19%. 70 officers have used the Good Loaf as an Out of Court Disposal Option. 64 (91.4%) have used it once, 5 (7.1%) have used it twice and 1 (1.4%) has used it 4 times.

Figure 3.8 Percentage of the use of The Good Loaf as an OOCDO by police team

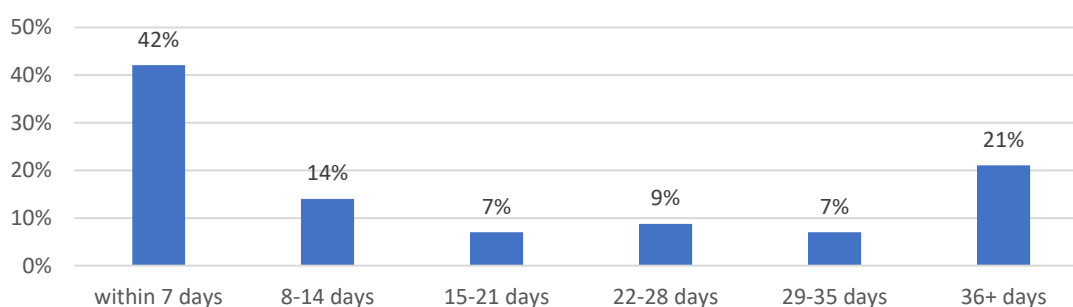


⁹ This is those people that selected that they had a learning disability, ADHD or had Autistic Spectrum Disorder or a combination of these.

3.5 Time between assessment and intervention

57 of the 79 (72%) cases had both an assessment date and a start date. About four in ten women started the programme within a week of being assessed (42%, 24) and 7 in 10 (72%, 41) started within a month of being assessed (see Figure 3.8). The average time from assessment to start date was about 3 weeks (22 days).

Figure 3.9 Time between assessment to start date.



3.6 Programmes Attended

The Wellbeing Programme

In this evaluation period, half of women (52%, 36) attended the wellbeing programme (6 were recorded as doing it on a one-one basis rather than in a group). One person on the wellbeing programme were also recorded as attending a parenting course. Of the women that attended the wellbeing programme, 86% (31) completed and 14% (5) breached. Women were referred to the wellbeing programme in the first year of the evaluation from September 2021 to August 2022, no women were referred to it after that time.

The Employability Programme

The second most common programme was the work/ employability programme which 35% (24) of women were recorded as attending. Of the women that attended the employability programme, two were withdrawn, 1 was still on the programme and 1 woman died. Of those remaining, 85% (17) completed the programme and 15% (3) breached. In the second year of the evaluation all women but four have been referred to the work programme.

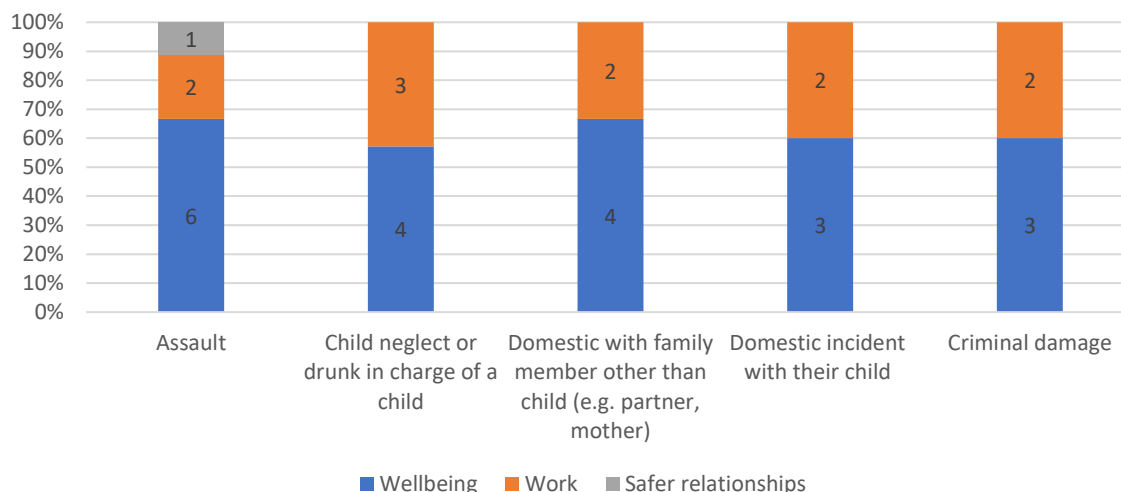
The Safer Relationships Programme

The remaining 13% (9) of women with a programme recorded attended the Safer Relationships Programme (2 were recorded as doing it on a one-to-one basis rather than in a group). All nine women completed the programme. In the first year of the evaluation five women were referred to the safer relationships programme and in the second year four were referred.

Within the pre surveys women completed they were asked what offence they had committed and what programme that they had been allocated to. 47 women completed pre surveys. The figure below shows the programmes that women were allocated to by their category of offence for the most prominent types of offences identified by the researchers which were: assault with no mention of it being against a family member (9), child neglect or being drunk in charge of a child (7), a domestic incident with a

partner or other family member (6) excluding children, a domestic incident with their child (5) and criminal damage (5).

Figure 3.10: Type of offending and programme attended for the five most common types of offence identified in the pre-surveys.



3.7 Summary

What is particularly notable looking at the process data is that the use of The Good Loaf as an OOC is decreasing with 71% of the referrals occurring in the first year of the current evaluation period. While there has been a slight downward trend in the overall use of OOCs, the decline of the use of The Good Loaf specifically is more pronounced. There were more referrals to The Good Loaf in the previous evaluation period when activity was severely affected by Covid-19 than in this evaluation period. Additionally, in the previous evaluation period The Good Loaf constituted 7% of overall OOCs compared to 4% in this evaluation period. Therefore, it is important for consideration to be given to whether the option is being effectively utilised by the police as an OOC option for women. Highlighted in this chapter are the police teams that are utilising The Good Loaf as an OOC option and the number of officers that have used it. This may provide useful information to determine the extent to which the option is being used across teams and geographies and opportunities for promoting its use. There has been awareness raising of The Good Loaf as an OOC option for officers, but it is important that this is a continuous process and officers are aware of the different options The Good Loaf can offer.

According to the police data, 83% of women complied with the OOC whilst the rate calculated using the data provided by The Good Loaf was slightly lower at 79%. To provide context this compliance rate is like that found in an evaluation conducted on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on their Conditional Caution Scheme which consisted of 607 offenders, with a compliance rate of 84% (Cordis Bright, 2018).

Demographic data is recorded above but it is difficult to comment on whether those that have been referred to the Good Loaf are representative in terms of age and ethnicity of the available cohort. This would require a larger sample as well as defining the nature of the cohort that they are coming from, in other words what is the demographic breakdown of the cohort of women that the police could give a conditional caution to which may be very difficult to identify.

The process data also highlights that the programmes women attended tended to be dependent on the time period in which they went through the evaluation. Women were referred to the wellbeing

programme in the first year of the evaluation from September 2021 to August 2022, whereas in the second year of the evaluation most women were referred to the Employability programme. A smaller group of women were referred to the Safer Relationships Programme more sporadically through the two-year period. Additionally, when using the pre survey data to compare offence type against allocation of programme, the data (although only a subset of the whole cohort) show that there were a notable number of cases that involved child neglect or women having altercations with their children. These women were allocated either to the work or the wellbeing programme, dependent on what time-period they went through the programme. Additionally, women that had been referred due to other domestic incidents were also referred to the wellbeing or work programmes. Given the prominence of assault, domestic offences and offences involving the parent-child relationships it may be beneficial to review the programmes that women are being allocated to. The ability of The Good Loaf to offer the most appropriate group programmes to meet the offending needs of women being referred is likely to be hampered by the number of referrals that they are receiving and the time frames in which women need to complete the OOD.

The results demonstrated that this is a group with significant mental health need with about half describing themselves as having a mental health issue. Additionally, about a quarter described themselves as having a long-term health condition and nearly a fifth could be classed as neurodiverse¹⁰. Although caution must be exercised due to numbers of women that completed post surveys there was a higher proportion of women in the post surveys that said that they had no health conditions or disabilities than in the pre, this is worthy of note as it may reflect that a lower proportion of women with physical health, mental health or neurodiverse needs complete the intervention and/ or engaged with the evaluation process.

¹⁰ This is those people that selected that they had a learning disability, ADHD or had Autistic Spectrum Disorder or a combination of these.

4 The Good Loaf Programmes – Pre and Post data measuring Resilience, Wellbeing and Self-Esteem

To measure whether there have been changes in the women's resilience, wellbeing and self-esteem the women are asked to complete three measurement scales at the start of the programmes (pre-measures) and at the end (post measures). The scales are the Brief Resilience Scale, The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). The scales and the results of the pre and post measures are discussed below.

4.1 Survey completion

For this evaluation period, 47 (60%) of the 78 women that were referred to The Good Loaf for an OOC completed pre-surveys. In most cases where there was not a pre-survey an explanation was provided (23, 74%) as to why. The most common reason was that women did not attend the initial meeting with The Good Loaf prior to the programme (8), which is perhaps an important point of consideration for future evaluations to ensure additional opportunities are in place to allow pre-data to be collected. In 5 cases the reason recorded was a language barrier, which is also important to note as those with little English were therefore inhibited in their ability to participate in the evaluation process, but it is also likely to have hindered their ability to fully benefit from the intervention. Other reasons pre-surveys were not completed were because they were recorded as having breached prior to any engagement (5), their cases had been closed (2), the police had changed the caution (1), they were recorded as having learning difficulties (1) or they had died (1).

A third of women (26, 33%) completed post surveys for the programme. Some women did not complete the post surveys because they had breached (15, 19%) or their cases were closed or withdrawn by the police (5, 8%). One woman died and one woman had not completed the programme yet (2,3%). However, it is important to note that in 32 (41%) cases a post survey was not achieved despite them completing the programme. Lack of engagement is not an uncommon problem in this type of evaluation and steps were taken to try to maximise the number of post surveys achieved. Due to a lack of resource availability in The Good Loaf to complete post surveys the research team took over the administering of the surveys in April 2022. With the consent of participants, contact details were provided to the research team to contact the women and complete the surveys. However, in many cases mobiles were tried three times on different days and times and surveys were not completed either due to refusal, non-response or interviews being arranged and then participants not picking up at arranged times. Therefore, where possible the research team started to attend The Good Loaf to complete the post surveys/ interview whilst women were on site (in a confidential space), which increased the response rate to the post surveys significantly from 32% in the first year to 83% in the second year. As with pre surveys some of the post survey measures were not completed in some cases due to the women having limited English.

4.2 The Brief Resilience Scale (BRS)

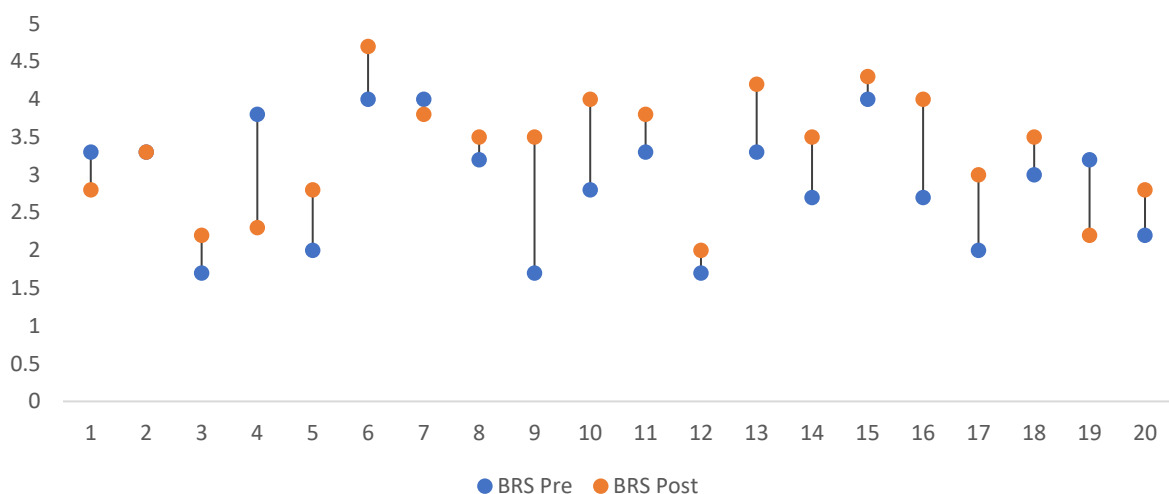
The Brief Resilience Scale (Smith *et al.* 2008) was created to assess the perceived ability to bounce back or recover from stress. The scale was developed to assess a unitary construct of resilience, including both positively and negatively worded items. The BRS score interpretation is 1.00-2.99 is classed as 'low resilience', 3-4.30 is classed as medium resilience and 4.31-5.00 is classed as high resilience.

There were 46 cases with pre scores on the BRS and the average score was 2.69 which would be classed as 'low resilience'. 57% (26) of this sample would be classed as having low resilience, 43% (20) as having medium resilience and none as having high resilience. As a comparison in a study with 844 participants containing a mix of healthy people and people suffering from diseases Smith *et al.* (2013) found an average score of 3.707, which would be classed as medium resilience. This suggests that the sample of women being referred to the Good Loaf via an O OCD have a lower-than-average level of resilience.

22 women had post BRS scores, but two of these did not have pre scores to compare against. Figure 4.1 below shows the pre and post BRS scores for the 20 that had both pre and post scores. Cases 1-10 were on the work programme, 11-17 were on the wellbeing programme and 18-20 were on the safer relationships programme. In most cases (15, 75%) women saw an increase/ improvement in their BRS score, 4 (20%) saw a reduction (see 1,4,7 and 19 in the figure below) and 1 (5%) saw no change (case 11). Across the 20 cases the average pre-score was 2.89 (slightly higher than the pre score for the overall sample) and the average post score was 3.32, meaning that the average improvement in scores pre to post was 0.42.

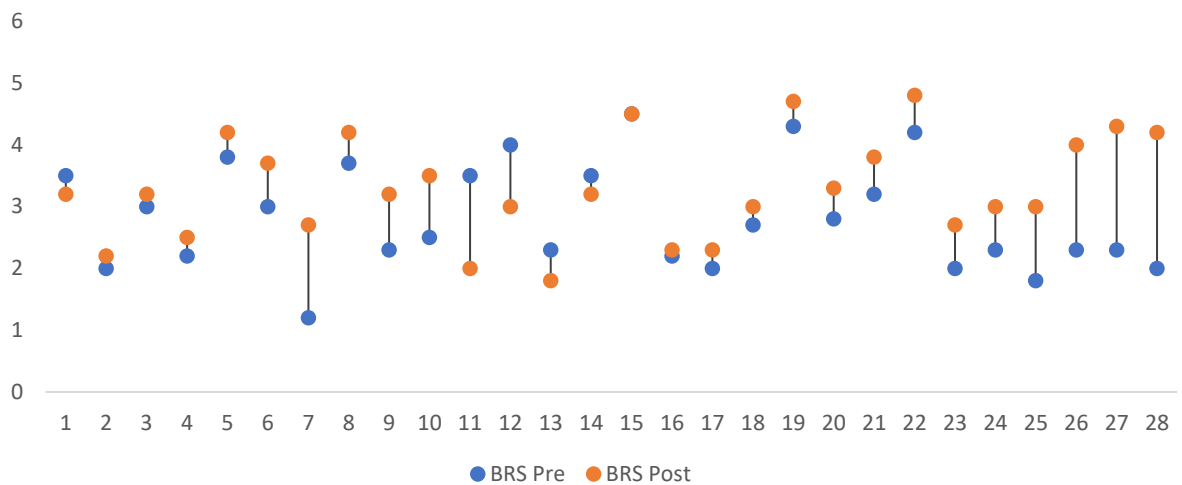
In terms of resilience categories of those with pre and post scores that started with low resilience 5 moved into the medium resilience category pre the intervention and 4 remained in the low resilience category but saw an improvement in their scores. Of the 11 that started in the medium resilience category 2 moved into the high resilience category and 6 remained in the medium resilience category although they saw an improvement in their scores (except for one that saw a reduction). However, the remaining 3 that started in the medium resilience category fell into the low resilience category post the intervention.

Figure 4.1 Pre and Post Brief Resilience Scale Scores (BRS) for O OCD women, September 2021-August 2023



Comparing the data in this evaluation period to the previous evaluation period the findings are similar. In the first evaluation there were 28 cases with BRS pre and post scores. In this sample the average pre-score was 2.83 whereas the average post score was 3.3, meaning there was an average improvement in BRS scores of 0.47. In most cases (22, 79%) women saw an increase/ improvement in their BRS score, 4 (18%) saw a reduction and 1 (4%) saw no change. Figure 4.2 below shows the pre and post BRS scores for the 28 that had both pre and post scores. Cases 1 to 7 completed a domestic abuse programme, cases 8-10 completed the work programme and cases 11-28 completed the wellbeing programme.

Figure 4.2 Pre and Post Brief Resilience Scale Scores (BRS) for OECD women, April 2019-March 2021



Therefore, collating the data across the two evaluations 48 cases had pre and post BRS measures, the average pre score was 2.85 (low resilience) and the average post score was 3.3 (medium resilience) resulting in an average change of +0.5. Figure 4.3 below illustrates the average pre and post scores for women that started in the low, medium and high categories. When looking at women’s pre score those that started with low resilience saw the highest average increase in their resilience (+0.86), compared to only 0.008 for those that already had medium resilience to start with and no increase for the one case that had high resilience to start with.

Figure 4.3 Mean pre and post BRS score by category of resilience women started in

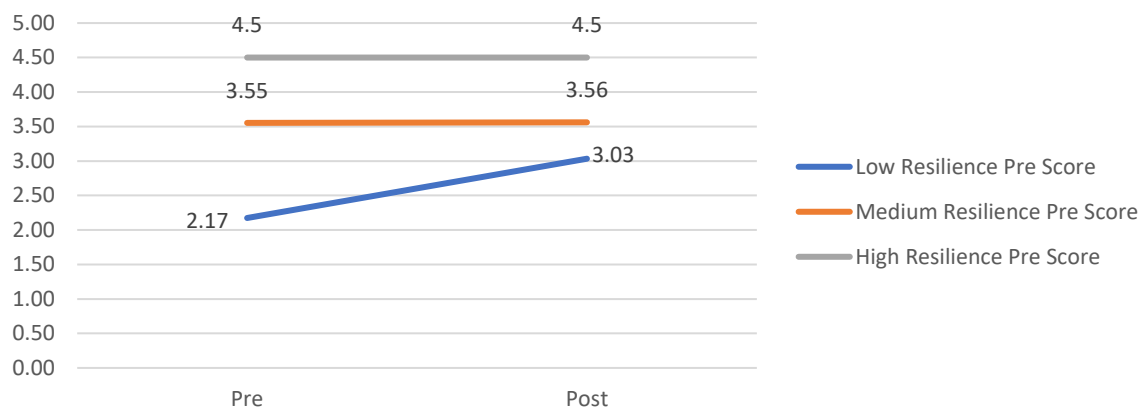
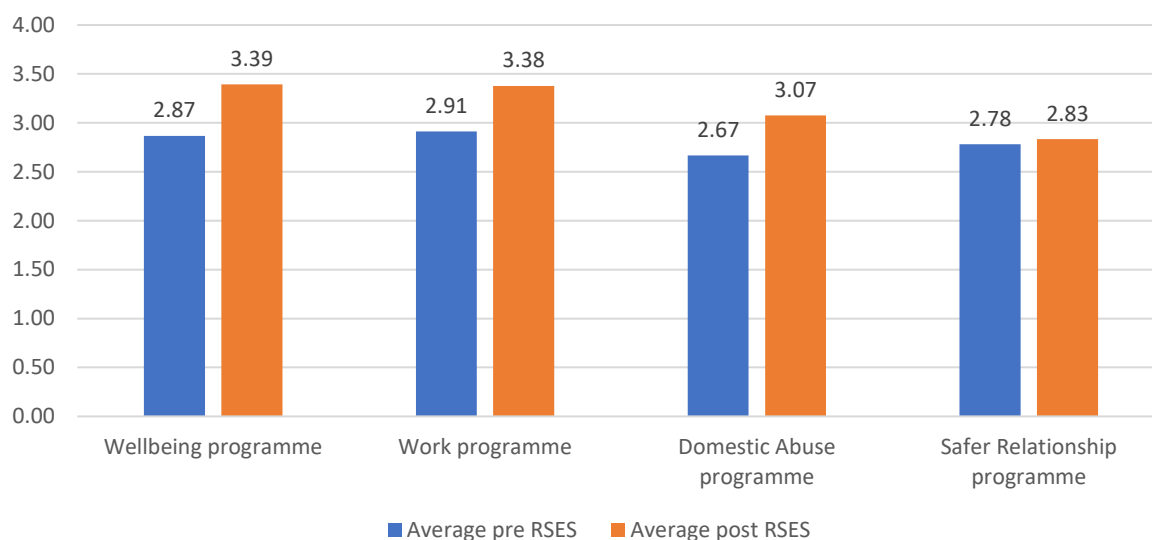


Figure 4.4 shows the pre and post BRS score for each programme, caution should be exercised in relation to the domestic abuse and safer relationship programmes as across the 2 evaluations only 7 and 3 women attended these programmes. For the 25 women across the evaluations that attended the wellbeing programme the average change in BRS was +0.53 (from 2.87 to 3.39) and for the 13 women across the evaluations that attended the work programme the average change in BRS was +0.46 (from 2.91 to 3.38).

Figure 4.4 Change in BRS scores by programme, for participants across both evaluation periods.



4.3 The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS)

Wellbeing was assessed via the Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS)¹⁰, which is a short version of the Warwick– Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS). The WEMWBS was developed to enable the monitoring of mental wellbeing in the general population and the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing. The SWEMWBS uses 7 of the WEMWBS’s 14 statements about thoughts and feelings, which relate more to functioning than feelings and so offer a slightly different perspective on mental wellbeing. Higher scores indicate higher levels of mental wellbeing with the highest possible score being 35. The recommended cut off points are low wellbeing = 7.0-19.5, medium wellbeing = 19.6-27.4 and high wellbeing = 27.5-35.0¹¹

47 participants had SWEMWBS pre scores which ranged between 12.4 and 30.7 with the average score being 19.38. This compares to an average of 23.45 for women in the East Midlands which is taken from the Health Survey England 2010-2013 and referenced by Ng Fat, L. *et al.* (2016). This may indicate that the wellbeing of the women referred to The Good Loaf is below average. Whereas in the UK population it would be expected that 15% have what would be categorised as low wellbeing scores and 15% as having high wellbeing scores, 60% (28) of this sample had low wellbeing scores and only 2% (1) had a high wellbeing score.

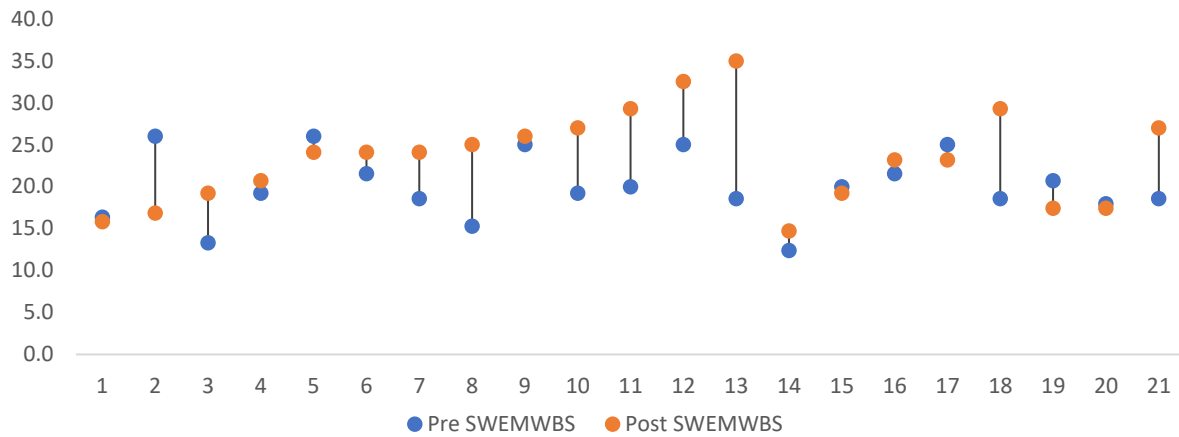
Twenty-three women had post scores, however two of these did not have pre scores so a measure of change was not possible. Across the 21 cases with pre and post scores the average pre-score was 19.96 (slightly higher than the pre score for the overall sample with pre-scores) and the average post score was 23.41, meaning that the average improvement in scores pre to post was 8.44.

Two thirds (14, 67%) of women saw an increase/ improvement in their SWEMWBS score but the remaining third (7, 33%) saw a reduction (see 1,2,5,15,17, 19 and 20 in Figure 4.5). The change in scores

¹¹ This is calculated by putting approximately 15% of participants into high wellbeing and 15% into low wellbeing. Using this approach, UK population samples put score ranges as follows, the top 15% of scores range from 27,5-35 and the bottom 15% from 7.0-19.5.
<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/using/howto/>

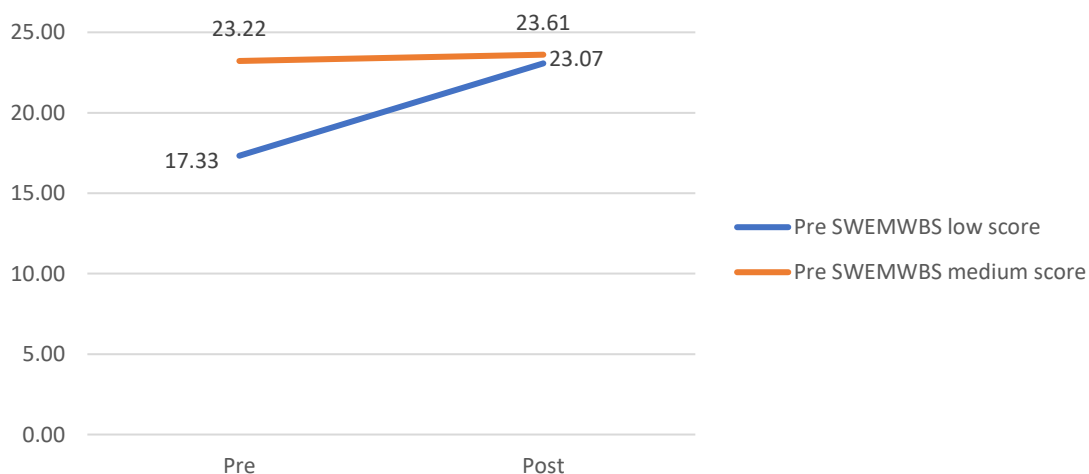
for each case are illustrated in the figure below. Cases 1-13 were on the work programme, 14-18 were on the wellbeing programme and 19-21 were on the healthy relationships programme.

Figure 4.5. Pre and Post Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale (SWEMWBS) for OOCd women, Sept 2021-August 2023



It is important to note also that not only did the SWEMWBS score improve for 14 out of 21 participants, 9 (43%) moved up into a new wellbeing category. Of 11 participants who started in the low wellbeing category (i.e., 7-19.5), 5 moved into the medium wellbeing category (i.e. >19.5-27.4), 2 moved into the high wellbeing (27.5 or >) category while 4 remained in the low wellbeing category. Of the 10 participants that started in the medium wellbeing bracket 2 moved up into the high wellbeing bracket, 5 remained in the medium wellbeing bracket, while three moved from medium to low wellbeing. When looking at women’s pre score women that started with low wellbeing saw the highest average increase in their wellbeing (6.09), compared to only 0.54 for those that already had medium wellbeing (see the figure below).

Figure 4.6 Mean pre and post SWEMWBS score by category of wellbeing women started in

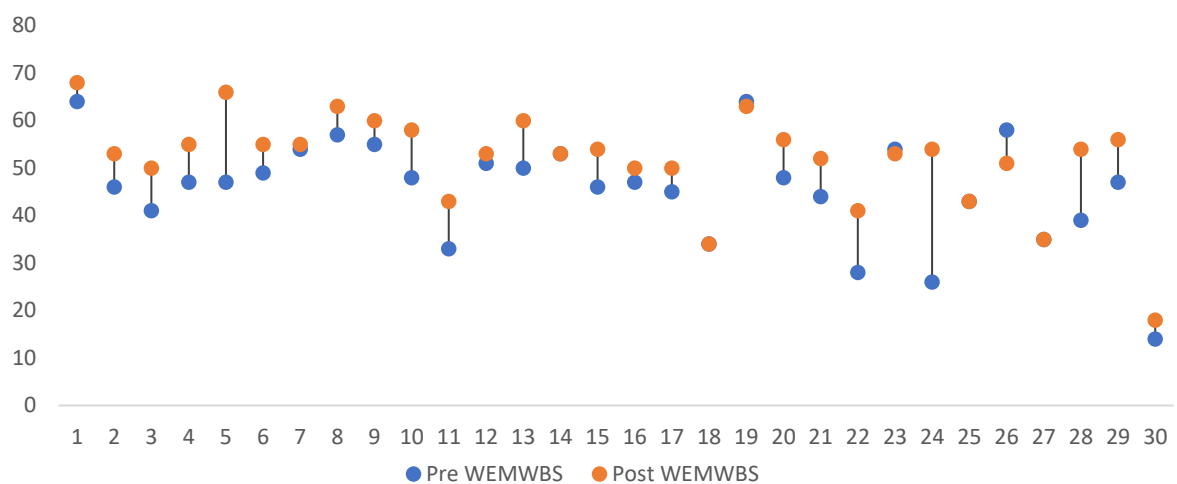


All programmes saw an average increase in the SWEMWBS score, with the work programme seeing the greatest average change from 20.3 to 24.5 (+4.28), followed by the wellbeing programme from 19.51 to 21.95 (+2.44) and the safer relationships programme (+1.53). It should be noted that the wellbeing programme and safer relationships programme are relatively small sample sizes, 5 and 3 respectively compared to the work programme (13).

Comparing the data in this evaluation period to the previous evaluation period the findings are similar for wellbeing although in the previous evaluation the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale (WEMWBS) was used. In the first evaluation there were 30 cases with WEMWBS pre and post scores. In this sample the average pre-score was 45.57 whereas the average post score was 51.87, meaning there was an average improvement in WEMWBS scores of 6.3. In most cases (23, 77%) women saw an increase/ improvement in their WEMWBS score, 3 (10%) saw a reduction and 4 (13%) saw no change. The change in scores for each case are illustrated in the figure below. Cases 1 to 6 completed the work programme, cases 8-23 completed the wellbeing programme and cases 24-30 completed the domestic abuse programme.

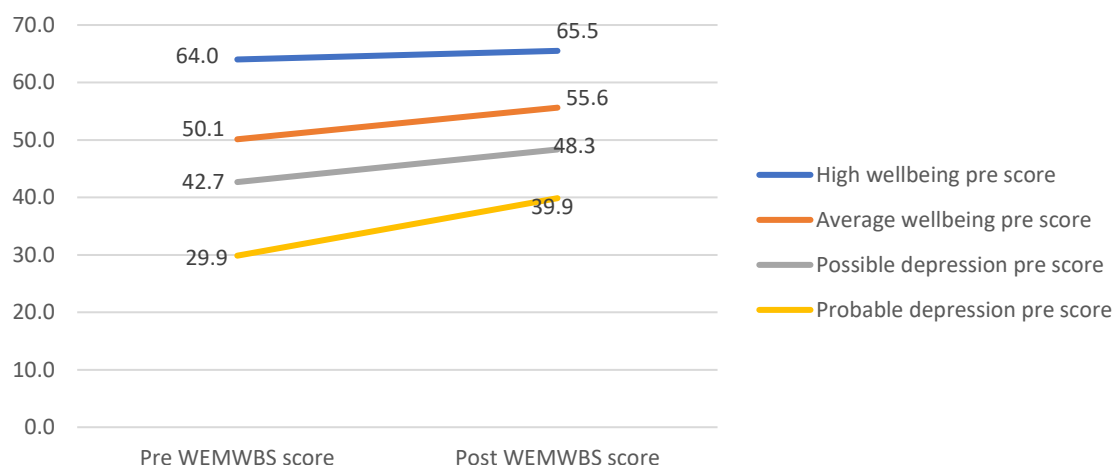
It is important to note that although 23 out of 30 (77%) saw an improved WEMWBS post the intervention, a smaller proportion saw enough of a change in the wellbeing score to change their wellbeing category (8, 27%). 4 of the 8 participants that started in the low wellbeing category moved into the medium wellbeing category and 4 of the 16 who started in the medium wellbeing category moved into the high category. All other participants (22, 73%) did not move from their initial wellbeing category.

Figure 4.7 Pre and Post Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale (WEMWBS) for OECD women, April 2019-March 2021



When looking at women’s pre score the average improvement in wellbeing increased the lower the initial category was, that is those that had ‘high wellbeing’ to start with saw an average improvement of +1.5, for those with ‘average wellbeing’ they saw an average improvement of +5.5, those with ‘possible depression’ saw an average improvement of +5.7 and those with ‘probable depression’ saw an average improvement of +10.

Figure 4.8 Mean pre and post WEMWBS score by category of wellbeing women started in



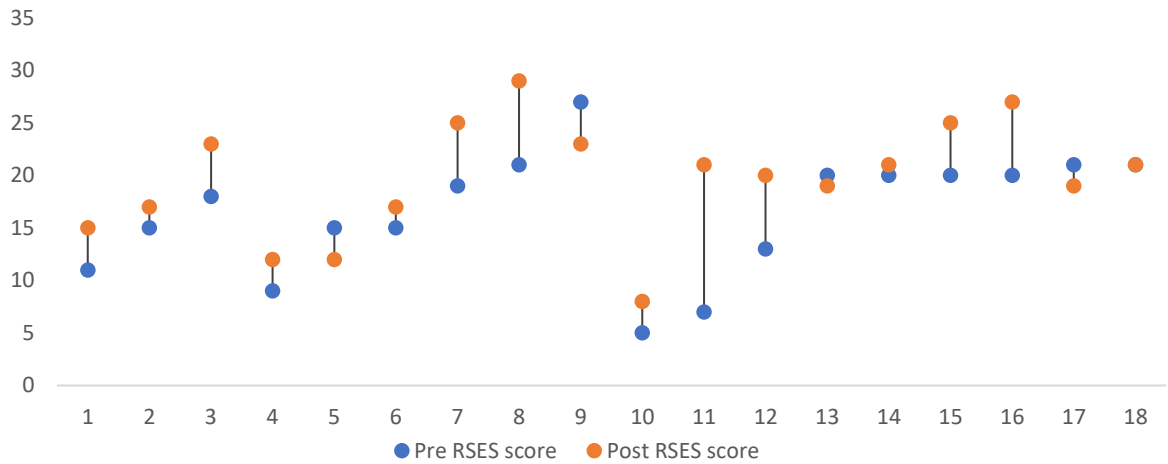
All programmes saw an average increase in the WEMWBS score, with the work programme seeing the greatest average change from 49.0 to 57.8 (+8.83), followed by the domestic abuse programme from 37.43 to 44.43 (+7) and the wellbeing programme (+5.12). It should be noted that the work programme and domestic abuse programme are relatively small sample sizes, 6 and 7 respectively compared to the wellbeing programme (17).

4.4 The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)

The Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES) was used to measure self-esteem. It uses a scale of 0–30 where a score less than 15 may indicate problematic low self-esteem. 44 cases had complete self-esteem pre-scores using the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES). Pre scores ranged between 3 and 28 and the mean score was 14.45 which would indicate low self-esteem. 45% (20) of the sample had low self-esteem (i.e., a score of 15 or below).

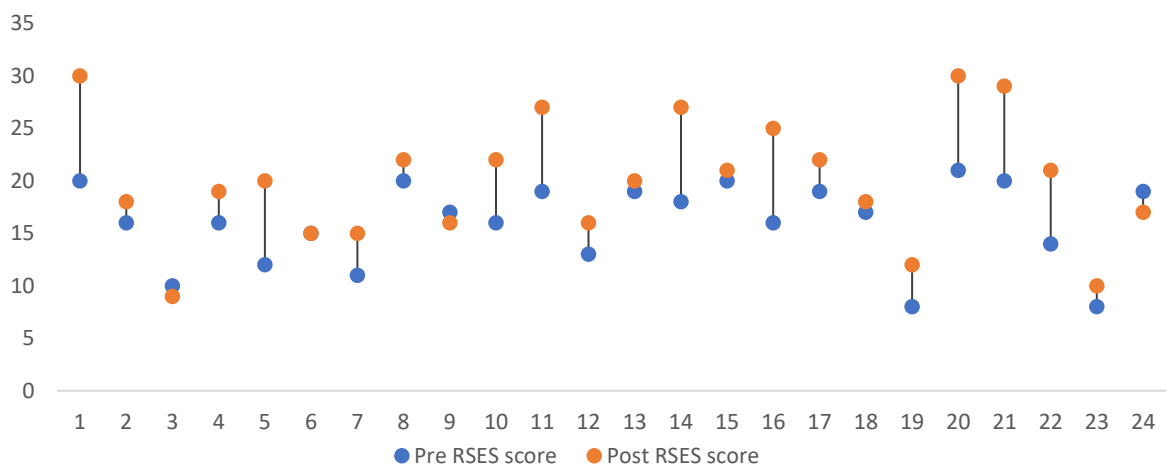
21 cases had post RSES scores, but three of these did not have pre scores to compare against. Figure 4.9 below shows the pre and post RSES scores for the 18 that had both. Cases 1-3 were on the wellbeing programme, 4-8 were on the wellbeing programme and 9-19 were on the wellbeing programme. In just under three quarters of cases (13, 72%) women saw an increase/ improvement in their RSES score, 4 (22%) saw a reduction (see 5, 9, 13 and 17 in the figure below) and 1 (6%) saw no change (case 18). Across the 18 cases the average pre-score was 16.5 (which is higher than for the overall sample of women with pre scores) and the average post score was 19.7. This represents an average increase pre to post of 3.2. All programmes saw an average increase in the RSES score, with the safer relationships programme seeing the greatest average change from 14.7 to 18.3 (+3.7), followed by the wellbeing programme from 15.8 to 19 (+3.2) and the work programme from 17.4 to 20.4 (+3). It should be noted that the work programme and wellbeing programme are relatively small sample sizes, 5 and 3 respectively compared to the work programme (10).

Figure 4.9 Pre and Post Rosenberg Self Esteem Scores (RSES) for OECD women September 2021 to August 2023



In the first evaluation there were 31 cases with RSES pre and post scores. In this sample the average pre-score was 15.5 whereas the average post score was 19.5, meaning there was an average improvement in RSES scores of 4.03. In most cases (24, 77%) women saw an increase/ improvement in their RSES score, 4 (13%) saw a reduction and 3 (10%) saw no change. In figure 4.10 cases 1 to 6 completed a work/ employability programme, cases 7-24 completed the wellbeing programme and cases 25-31 completed the domestic abuse programme. All programmes saw an average increase in the RSES score, with the wellbeing programme seeing the greatest average change from 16.4 to 20.6 (+4.2), followed by the domestic abuse programme from 13.9 to 17.9 (+4) and the work programme from 14.8 to 18.5 (+3.67). It should be noted that the work programme and wellbeing programme are relatively small sample sizes, 6 and 7 respectively compared to the work programme (18).

Figure 4.10 Pre and Post Rosenberg Self Esteem Scores (RSES) for OECD women April 2019-March 2021



Therefore, collating the data across the two evaluations, 49 cases had pre and post RSES measures, the average pre score was 15.88 and the average post score was 19.59. The average change in RSES score was +3.71, a positive improvement. When looking at women’s pre score women that started with low self-esteem saw the highest average increase in their self-esteem (+4.4), compared to +3.24 for those that would not have been classed as having low self-esteem (see figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11 Mean pre and post RSES score by category of wellbeing women started in

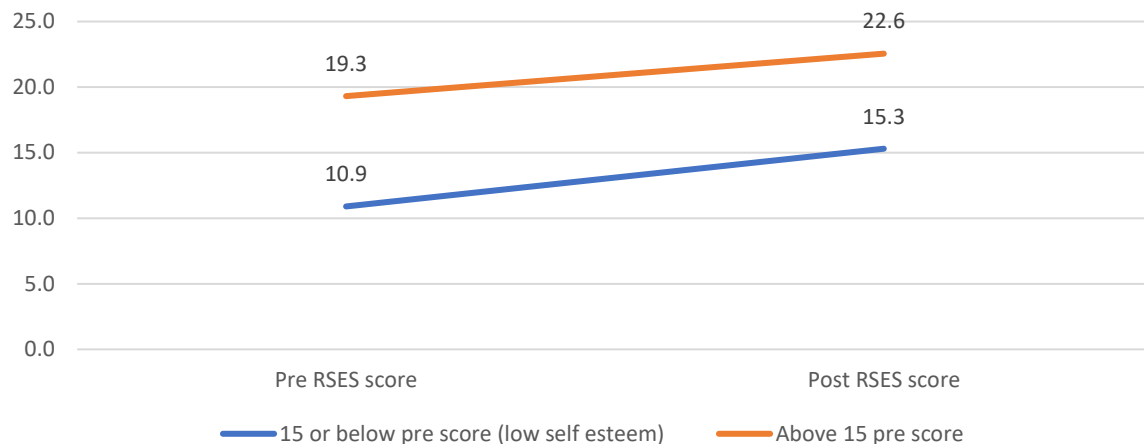
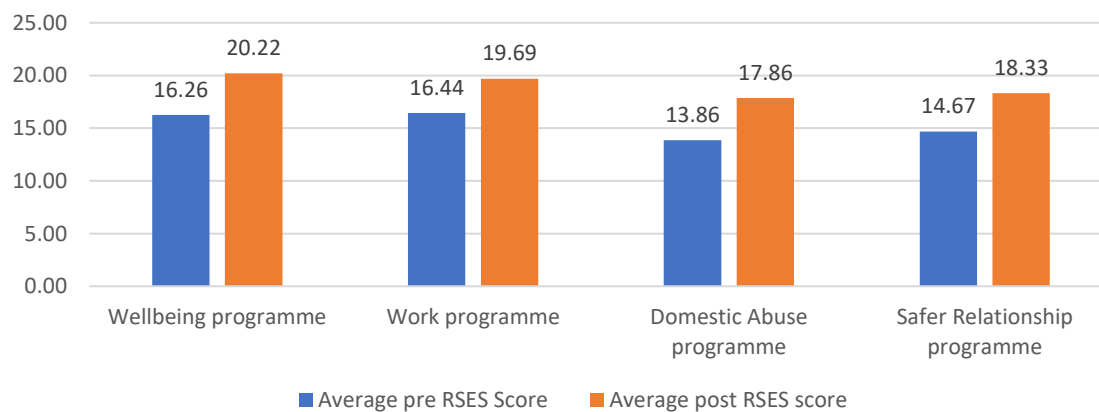


Figure 4.12 shows the pre and post RSES score for each programme, caution should be exercised in relation to the domestic abuse and safer relationship programmes as across the 2 evaluations only 7 and 3 women in the evaluation attended these programmes. For the 25 women across the evaluations that attended the wellbeing programme the average change in RSES was +3.96 (from 16.26 to 20.22), for the 13 women across the evaluation that attended the work programme the average change in RSES was +3.25 (16.44 to 19.69), for the 7 women attending the domestic abuse programme the average change was +4.0 (from 13.86 to 17.86) and for the 3 women attending the safer relationships programme the average change was +3.7 (from 14.67 to 18.3).

Figure 4.12 Change in RSES scores by programme, for participants across both evaluation periods.



4.5 Summary

For all three programmes, participants completed pre and post surveys which included measures of their resilience, wellbeing and self-esteem. Pre- measures of women referred to the programmes suggest that they tend to have lower than average resilience, wellbeing and self-esteem than would be expected in the population.

It is important to acknowledge that a limitation of the evaluation is that less than half of women that were referred to the programme completed post surveys. However, for the sample that did complete the programme and completed post surveys the analysis demonstrates improvements in resilience,

wellbeing and self-esteem in most cases which replicates the findings of the previous evaluation. Additionally, women on all the programmes were found to see an average improvement in their resilience, self-esteem and wellbeing scores. Whilst the wellbeing programme participants had the highest average improvement in resilience, and in self-esteem (along with the domestic abuse programme) it was the work programme across both evaluation periods that saw the greatest improvements in wellbeing.

What is important to reflect upon is that outcomes for women on the programme will and should differ. For example, it is perhaps an unrealistic and inappropriate measure of success to expect that all women's scores on resilience, wellbeing and self-esteem will increase as some of the cohort did not have low resilience, wellbeing or self-esteem to begin with. What the analysis does show is that there are more sizable positive shifts in resilience, wellbeing and self-esteem for those women whose pre-scores highlight that they are in need of help in these areas. In other words, isolating these cases shows that the programmes have a stronger benefit for them than for those that would not be classed as being low in resilience, wellbeing or self-esteem.

5 Qualitative Evidence – The Voices of Women

This section focuses on the voices of the women both at the beginning of the programme in terms of what their expectations were in relation to The Out of Court Disposal and attending The Good Loaf and at the end in terms of their experiences of the programme and, what benefits, if any, they felt there were and what improvements could be made.

At the beginning of the programme women would be asked to complete two pre-surveys. One of the pre-surveys was more qualitative in nature and focused on women's expectations prior to starting the programme whilst the other survey contained the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale (SWEMWBS), the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) and the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSE) discussed in section 4. The pre-surveys were provided to the women by The Good Loaf team. It is important to note that towards the end of the programme women were only provided with the pre survey containing the scales. Therefore, this section refers to 32 pre-surveys whereas in section 4 the sample of pre-surveys is 47.

5.1 Reservations about attending the Good Loaf

Women were asked if there was anything that they were nervous or worried about, 12 out of 32 survey participants (38%) said no or left the question blank. Of the 20 that did express a concern the most common concern was being around other people in a group and meeting new people (11):

*Just new people - struggle to trust new people...
Being within the community or group setting.
Being in front of other people and speaking.*

One woman expressed a concern about other people being unkind - "Other people being nasty."
Two women expressed concern due to mental health difficulties:

*I suffer with severe depression and anxiety so the whole situation is very unnerving for me.
Agoraphobia - don't go out, don't have friends.*

Other women had concerns about practical implications of attending the programme relating to travel, work and family life.

*Not finishing it in time before the baby comes.
...over a stupid mistake it has come to this – coming out of work to do this – it's a waste of my time.
Anxiety around travel.*

In the previous evaluation, about two-thirds said that there was not anything that they were worried or nervous about. For those who said that they worried the most common answer was the 'unknown' or 'something new'. As with this evaluation meeting new people was also a concern for some.

5.2 What women hoped to gain from the programme.

Seven of the 32 women did not know what they would gain from the programme, with one commenting 'I feel so rough and low I really don't know' and a further 3 left it blank. Of the 20 that specified what they hoped to gain the most common answers are summarised below

- To gain confidence in themselves and in being around other people (4)

*I want to gain more confidence and have someone to help me to be brave.
I hope to gain more confidence with being around other people and to learn more about myself when dealing with new situations.*

- To improve their ability to parent or keep their child safe (3).

*How to look after my baby safely.
Good parenting skills.
To learn about me so I can be a good parent.*

- To gain skills related to finding employment (3) whilst another on the work programme felt that it would help them towards gaining their maths and English GCSE.

*To gain confidence and help with building my cv.
I hope I gain some skills in working - achieve hospitality certificate - be someone instead of just existing.
Help towards my maths and English GCSEs.*

- To learn strategies to improve their mental health and regulate their emotions better (3) or improve their outlook or attitude towards themselves.

*Some ways of bettering my mental health - building confidence - to be in the community.
New strategies for my mental health.
Maybe to be more at peace with myself.
More positivity.*

- To learn about healthier and safer relationships (2)

*How to have a safer relationship and how to deal with my mood swings better.
I want to learn more about safer relationships - have more knowledge on how to stay safe and build positive relationships.*

- To learn to handle situations better, so they did not get in the same situation again (2).

*Better ways to handle situations.
To get learn how to avoid the same situation again.*

One woman said that her needs related more to detoxing from alcohol which may suggest that she could have benefited from an alcohol related OOAD. It is worth noting that there was no post survey for this participant as they breached.

What women hoped to gain from the programme were similar to those in the last evaluation where women hoped to: gain an understanding of their emotions and behaviours and self-regulation; Gain

confidence and improve their self-esteem; Receive support and someone to listen to them; Learn how to improve their own wellbeing and how to look after themselves better; Learn new skills, qualifications and/ or work experience) and understand patterns in domestic abuse.

5.3 Expectations of the usefulness of the programme in meeting their needs

Women tended to be positive at the beginning of the programme with 25% (8) selecting that they thought the programme would be 'very useful', 41% (13) selecting 'useful' and 22% (7) selecting 'fairly useful'. Only 1 (3%) selected not very useful and 2 (6%) not at all useful.

The majority of women that answered this question were due to go on the wellbeing programme (23, 72%). Those who answered 'fairly useful' in this group tended to express that they were open to the possibility that it could be interesting, they might learn something, or it may have some relevance rather than stating a specific benefit.

*It will have something relevant to my needs.
It might be quite interesting.
Because there may be a chance I can learn something new.*

Those that selected 'useful' or 'very useful' tended to be more specific in their answers about what they may gain.

*Show me other people who are going through the same as me.
To get me to what I need to know about myself and my children.
Just to help me come out of my shell.
I have a bit of confidence back just speaking about my situation.
Just because it is setting me up for something I've never had - how to deal with emotions - I have never been taught.*

One person that was due to go on the wellbeing course selected that it would not be at all useful in meeting their needs, commenting that it was a waste of their time. It is worth noting here that the participant did not have a post-survey as they breached.

All 4 women who were due to attend the work programme thought the programme would be useful with 2 selecting 'very useful', 1 'useful' and 1 selecting 'fairly useful' with all citing why.

*I hope the work experience will help me with my employment skills.
I struggle with this area.
I need help getting a job.
Allowing me to gain confidence.*

One of the women due to go on the healthy relationships programme thought the programme would be 'very useful' and was particularly keen to learn more about parenting skills, commenting:

Especially the parenting one because my first 2 children were taken away before I could prove that I could parent well. I want to keep this baby.

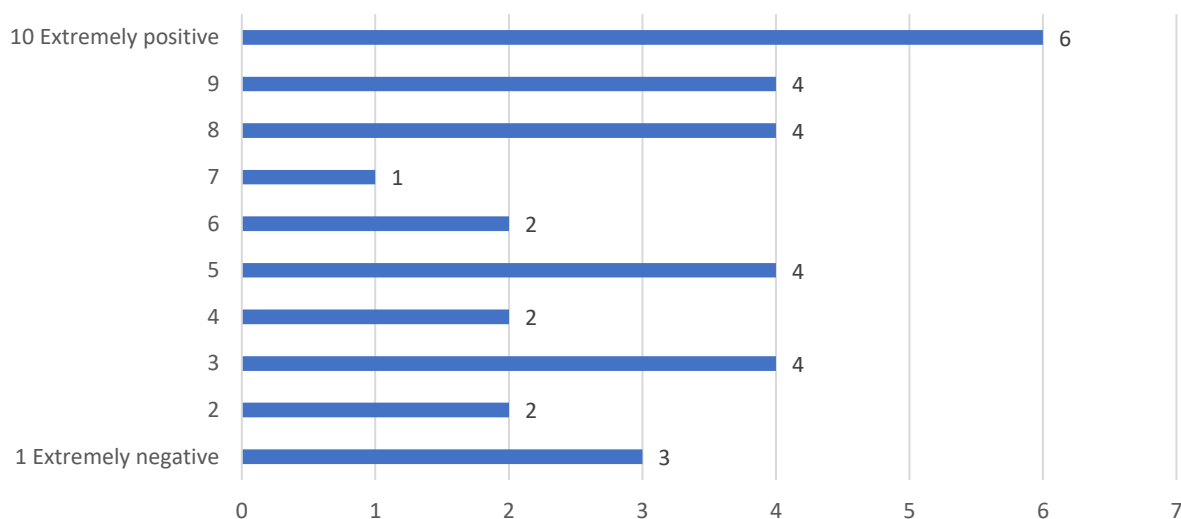
Another felt it would be 'useful' but simply gave the reason that she 'would be out doing something'. One woman said the programme would not be useful to them at all commenting that they didn't think they should be on it however, it is important to note that this individual completed a post survey in

which she rated the programme as ‘useful’ commenting ‘Helped a lot. Better understanding on certain things, will approach things a bit more diplomatically in future’. Another woman said that it would not be very useful because they had done courses before with NDAS, however on exiting the programme she also rated it as ‘useful’ commenting ‘the people were friendly and social the course content was explained without being patronising’.

5.4 Positivity about attending the programme.

Women were also asked to select on a scale of 1 to 10 how they felt about attending the programme, with 1 being extremely negative and 10 being extremely positive. There was quite a spread of answers for this question with 15 (47%) of women sitting on the more negative side of the scale (1 to 5) and 17 (53%) sitting on the more positive side of the scale (6 to 10).

Figure 5.1 Womens rating on how positive or negative they felt about attending the programme.



Most commonly those that selected 1-5 cited the reason being that they were anxious or nervous (4) about attending the programme.

*Very nervous - the unexpected - never done this before.
Because I suffer with anxiety.*

With others stating that it is difficult for them to ascertain this as they don't know what to expect.

*Until I attend, then I can see if it will be helpful to my needs.
Don't know what to expect.*

Others spoke of feeling that they should not have been put on it and a sense of injustice.

*I feel I'm being punished for a mental health issue.
I think it's a waste of my time because it was a one-off mistake.*

A few (3) spoke of the inconvenience of it in relation to their education and/ or work commitments.

This wasn't out of choice, its bad timing for university work, etc, but it could also be of benefit.

Mainly cos of time off work.

Not all of those that selected 6 to 10 (i.e., on the positive side of the scale) gave a reason for their response) but responses were related to improving their mental health, looking forward to receiving support, to learn something new or gain confidence.

*I need support and to talk about my feelings.
Think it will be helpful for my mental health.
to gain confidence and understand certain things.
I welcome the support.
This is going to change and help me.*

5.5 Information from the police on the OOC option and The Good Loaf

Women were asked 'was it explained to you as to why you received an Out of Court Disposal', most women said that it was explained to them by the police. However, some women were not sure if it was explained. Women felt that this may have been because of their mental state at the time, they found it difficult to absorb the information.

When I was arrested I didn't even understand you know because I was very distressed...and I didn't know I had to do this course and when the GL called me and I thought Oh my god I just want to put the phone down.

No, No. I was a mess, and I don't know it could be the fact that I was a mess, that could just literally be because how I felt that day.

Another woman when asked if it could be better explained commented 'Yes, but whether it was because I was quite distressed about being there, upset, worried about my children and I just I don't know...'. However, she said that the police had described it as a bit like a speed awareness course.

No, the impression I got because I was obviously really upset because I hadn't been arrested before and everything like that... they just said it was like nothing it was just a bit like a speed awareness so course so I was expecting something like that and they said because of Covid it would probably be done online which it wasn't anything like that...

Similarly, a woman commented that she felt misinformed about what the programme was.

In the beginning they explained to me would be like a drunk parents and child under 7 years ...but when I came here (the facilitator) explained that it was totally different... it's not an alcoholic group...I was thinking it was something like that. I was crying all the time because I am not alcoholic....

However, it is important to note that she also commented that communication was 'good, even in the police there was special workers, support and they were talking with me to explain, because I was in so big shock...' She also spoke of her high level of distress at being arrested.

Very bad, I'd been crying all the time...it was too much for me, I can tell you, too much. After police when I came home, I fell down ...I just fell down, it was dizzy...it was hard!

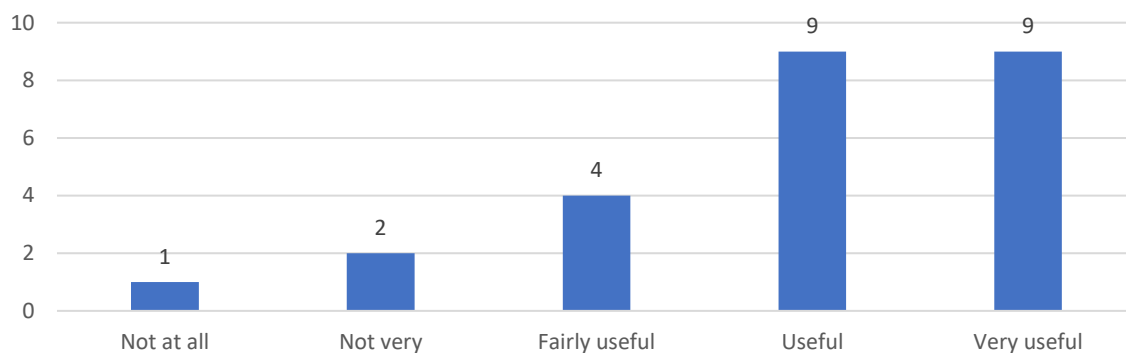
It is also important to note that a couple of women commented that they had been verbally and physically mistreated by the police. One woman commented that a police officer had called her a 'numpty' and she had been hit and pushed in the chest by a police officer. Another woman said that

she felt the police had *'beaten her up'*. Women were advised that they could make a complaint against the police. Due to these comments by women, the research team raised them with the commissioner. To improve the process during the research, the researchers had the available details to advise women on how to make a complaint and The Good Loaf also agreed that the researchers could signpost women to them to help with any police complaints women made in future. After this meeting no further disclosures were made by women regarding negative police treatment.

5.6 Perceived usefulness of the programme in meeting their needs.

Women were asked how useful the course was in meeting their needs. Over a third (9,36%) selected 'very useful', the same proportion (9, 36%) selected 'useful' and a further 16% (4) selected 'fairly useful'.

Figure 5.2 Womens ratings of the how useful the OOC course was at meeting their needs.



In terms of usefulness, women spoke of the programme benefitting them in increasing their understanding of healthy relationships.

Programme helps me with...people around at work...they give me a team leader position...but people don't listen...so (the programme facilitator) helped me with that and with my relationships, with my boyfriend, she opened my eyes a bit...

I didn't really know about what safer relationships were and received good insights into what healthy and unhealthy relationships are.

Taught what is a good relationship. Learnt from it. Learnt about consent.

Learnt about relationships, how to be better what are the good and bad qualities.

Other women commented that it changed the way they think and helped them to look at things from a different point of view.

It helped me think about things from a different perspective than I did before.

I came away with a different point of view.

One woman said that they it was 'fairly useful' as The Good Loaf made referrals for her, and she now has a housing worker and a mental health worker. Another woman described the course as useful because it *'pushed her to leave the house and battle depression'*.

Some women also talked about enjoying specific activities and why they felt they were of benefit to them, including wellbeing activities, employment and budgeting skills.

Wellbeing was definitely very useful, first aid was more of a refresher, crafts was good and I can show to my son.

Some of the workshops were useful, like the drawing where you're putting your emotions down on paper. Or doing the ice breakers, I enjoyed that and it helped people relax a little.

I like cooking so when I got to work in the cafe, I was a bit nervous but proud of myself as I'd never done that work before. Now I've seen this side of the work it's opened my eyes a bit. I've never been one for planning ahead but now I'm thinking more 'maybe I can do this'.

Budgeting one was very useful, learnt a lot of new things.

(I found) writing a CV very helpful, the different types of CV how to write it to get the job.

A common theme of the three cases that selected 'not very useful' or 'not at all useful' was the relevancy of the course to the reason for their referral.

I understand that they have to cater for lots of people, but I imagine a high percent of people who attend these courses are here because they have got a conditional discharge from the police, and I can't see how adding up and taking away and putting bits of coloured paper on canvas really teaches you a lot, I think it should be more educational as in behaviours, maybe how you can control your temper for want of a better word or how to deal with stressful situations.

It just for why I am here it just had not relevance at all (Asked how it could be made more relevant) 'if it was more, say like the courses and things were more towards why you are here sort of thing rather than doing arts and crafts and things like that'.

Did not feel that course was necessary, (I) was not happy about starting the course, wanted help related with the reason for the referral.

The relevance of the programme was also mentioned by a couple of the women that had said the programme was fairly useful or useful.

They were pretty useful, but it didn't really connect to the caution at all, it's useful in day-to-day life though.

I didn't think it was the appropriate course for the action. However, (I) did find it useful particularly in relation to identifying control.

A couple of women spoke of finding it difficult to relate to or tolerate other members of the group.

On the whole the course for me I just didn't relate to a lot of the ladies, I've never ever been in trouble before, so it was quite hard listening to people using drugs or children being in care.

Then another person there on the course is an alcoholic and she's really annoying me.

5.7 Changing attitudes and behaviour.

In terms of whether the course has changed the way they think or act, four women (16%) said that it had changed how they think or act a lot, with one woman saying that it had changed her entire life.

The course in combination with AA, has changed.....my entire life is different, I have found a faith, I go to church, I do service with other people so I now work with two other alcoholics, I don't drink at all, I am happily married for the first time in my whole life....my life is very different than it was 6 months ago, very different and there was never an issue around me as a parent, but I am a much more present parent now than I was, much more present.

This woman commented that between receiving the caution and starting the programme at The Good Loaf, she made another personal mistake (not criminal) after drinking that led her to seeking support from Alcoholics Anonymous. She highlighted that the issue was not picked up in Custody.

The conversation that I had with the doctor in custody and I just remember him lecturing me about how my children would be affected if my marriage fell apart. It was so far removed from my problems, everyone was obsessed with if there was domestic violence in the relationship, there was none, there never had been, alcohol was the problem. Nobody understood that until I spoke with (The Good Loaf) ...

Comments from the other women that said the programme had changed how they think or act a 'lot' were:

*I thought it would be a complete waste of time, I was wrong.
Did not think about it before.
It's the first time I've been in trouble, and it's opened my eyes to think before I act. Sometimes I act on impulse.*

A further seven women (28%) said that it had changed how they think or act quite a lot. One woman on the work programme commented that it had empowered her to take control over her own future and not focus on the past.

I have realised only I can change my future and I can't just look at the past.

Women on the healthy relationships programme commented:

*Changed my mindset - it has changed for example if I get into a relationship for instance, I understand boundaries and consent and that would change my decisions and actions.
The course helped me to be friendly and loyal with family and other people.*

Some women commented on the benefit of talking through issues and experiences with others in the group.

*Mixing with others, chats that we had with each other, communication with each other, it helped me.
Yes, after all this and the other part of my caution I've realised what is really important - family and being honest. Talking with others at my own pace about similar experiences has helped too.*

The other women that said quite a lot commented '*It helped me learn new things*' and '*It's changed my money & savings and how to eat more healthy*'.

Eleven women (44%) said that the programme had changed how they think or act 'a little'. Comments varied but themes included gaining confidence, coping strategies, learning how to avoid certain situations and to think before acting.

*Never been an aggressive person but this has helped me think things through before I act.
Approach things a little bit differently
Strategies to calm down.
Learnt how to avoid certain situations.
Better at saving money and eating better.
Confidence improved.
Via mindfulness it's changed how I think etc. and coping I suppose is better because of it. The café and crafting have not changed anything though.*

Comments of a couple of women that said 'a little' suggested that they did not feel that the programme was of particular use to them.

*Maybe in the future as life is content and not been overly stressful and have not needed to use the techniques given. it was hard to find positives in something that you don't want to do.
I could imagine that if I had issues like the others in my group, it was an amazing thing to be available. I see the benefit of the Good Loaf for other people, but not for me personally.*

One of the women said that "*It didn't change much to be honest; it didn't change much because I am a quite impulsive person... this is my personality you know and if something is happening especially around my children... but I try my best*". Only three of the women said that it had not changed how they think or act at all, commenting:

*I was already good with people, so it has not changed how I think or act.
I learned nothing, more practical skills would have been better. Not a reflection on The Good Loaf, just the course.
I was already doing what was being taught to be honest. I guess it's nice to have a few extra tips on budgeting.*

5.8 Perception of The Good Loaf and Continued Contact

Women were asked to select on a scale of 1 to 10 how they felt about having attended the programme, with 1 being extremely negative and 10 being extremely positive. Four in 10 (42%) selected extremely positive and a further 6 (25%) selecting 9. Only 3 (12%) selected 5 or below (i.e., being more on the negative side of the scale). Additionally, women were asked to comment on their overall experience of The Good Loaf to which the majority of comments were very positive. A key component of women's responses to this question was that people at The Good Loaf were friendly and welcoming.

*Positive. No one judgy, everyone was very friendly, no one knows why you're there unless you volunteer information.
Really friendly, quite welcoming*

It was good, I had thought about volunteering but it's awkward for me to get to. I live in another town and I don't drive. Being here though has given me more ideas for the future. Everyone's so friendly and like a family here.

Participants were asked whether they intended to stay on with The Good Loaf. Of the 26 that had post surveys, five (19%) selected yes. Three of these said that they intended to volunteer, one said that they were booked on to the healthy relationships programme and one said that she was thinking about doing the healthy relationships programme.

... I have been talking with (the programme facilitator) about doing some more courses with me about the relationships again...I need help yeah, because sometimes I am not, I am strong I know but in my mind I am not so I need some help and some support...and some information to help me.

This woman said that it was difficult, however, due to work and childcare arrangements. This was also raised by other women that said that they do not plan to stay on with The Good Loaf or they might in the future.

*Maybe as I like courses and learning new things however, difficult as (I) don't know when on rota (at work)
Don't know as have child, family work so difficult to*

Some women didn't select 'yes' they intended to stay on but indicated that they would like to return to The Good Loaf in some capacity.

I want to come in and have a coffee there with my children and I want to keep in contact.

Another woman talked of future things that she was doing with The Good Loaf which included a Choir performance and she said that they were going to help her find new accommodation.

A couple of the women said that they would not be planning to stay on with The Good Loaf because they, were not from, or were leaving the area. One suggesting that they would volunteer if they could when in Northampton or find something similar where they live and the other suggesting that they would have if they stayed in the area.

*No because I'm planning to move out of the area, if I was staying here I would continue coming as a way to get me out the house.
I'm going to look into the Good Loaf branch in Cornwall. If that's not feasible, I might see if I can work it in when I visit Northamptonshire.*

It would not be expected, or not necessarily intended that all women that went on the OOC at The Good Loaf would have continued contact. Women may not need further support and/ or have commitments such as work, family and children that make future contact difficult. However, the responses from women show that some do intend to continue contact and receive further support through attending courses and/ or volunteering. Additionally, comments suggest that women know that The Good Loaf is somewhere that they can return in the future, if they are not quite in the right place yet to engage further with The Good Loaf.

Not right now, but in future may be really good for me, but at the moment I've got a lot of demons I need to sort out. Currently I'm sorting myself out alone, without my ex-partner. I think the Good Loaf is a great place for people to start again, but not me right now.

They've asked me to come back and decorate cakes. I hope I do if my mental health allows me I will.

5.9 Improvements to the Scheme

Women were asked how the course be made better. Of the 26 responses, a high proportion (11) said that nothing could be improved. With many making very positive comments:

No, (the facilitator) was fantastic.

It was perfect I wouldn't change anything.

It couldn't be better, I am deffo better for being on the course.

I don't see how it could be better.

No, it is okay. This course is good because I learnt how to communicate with friends and family and to trust him and respect.

Personally, I don't think there is a way to improve. It was perfect. The mix of courses and café work was great, and the session content was really good.

The most common suggested improvement (3) related to the relevancy of the programme and it being more tailored to individual needs.

They should have focused on practical skills, like mortgage applications, housing grants, applying for benefits, etc. It should have been more specific and focused on things more relevant to each individual. For example, anger management courses would have been really helpful, and for some reason that wasn't offered.

It needs to be more relevant and more specific to the reason as to why you're given an order.

Taking time to see what the person actually wants to do and thinks could benefit them would be a good idea. I would have liked to do the budgeting course and the first aid but the first aid course didn't have enough people sign up. In that case what they could do is give out handouts or something. I think it needs to be more tailored, budgeting would have been helpful, crafts was NOT and I just don't get why that was even a thing.

Some commented on the dynamic of the group and that in some sessions there was negativity, non-participation or late arrivals. A couple of women spoke of other participants being on their mobile phones.

Depends on individual circumstances I think. People need to contribute and not just sit on their phone - just participate. There was useful content there and I didn't know what to expect originally so it was useful.

Also, I think they need to have stricter mobile phone policies - one lady last week just sat there in the course for the entire hour on her phone and talking on it too. The tutor dealt with it well, but it was just ridiculous really.

More people. At the beginning of the course there were 7 but some left which meant there 4-5 - some turn up late or came into the course late. Would have liked more consistency.

Another suggestion by women was that it might be useful to have follow-up after the programme in case additional support is needed.

No-one to speak to after the course. No follow up.

At the end of it, maybe somebody could check in and see if people need additional support since the course is now over and the police aren't involved - perhaps some people need an extra check in or something before all the services drop away.

One woman said that it would be useful to have one to one time.

During the 4 hours that you're there, a 1:1 would be really good. The group leader was amazing, but she's dealing with everyone. Particularly this would be good for people not so comfortable speaking in groups. Some could be group work and some could be 1:1. I would have loved to have spoken to someone 1:1, I probably would have gained a hell of a lot more that way.

This woman spoke of feeling distressed listening to other people's stories that she could not relate to:

I found it so hard and distressing to listen to women talking about choosing drugs over their children, even though I get why they're like it and why they have those problems, I just felt I wasn't the same as them, not on par with them. For me, kids come first, always. I didn't find it useful in the sense of the group talking, it was just sad and awful.

Two women suggested that it would be useful if there were more locations. One woman said that the timing of the programme could be better so it didn't span the morning and the afternoon but was either the morning or the afternoon due to work commitments. Another said that the duration of the programme is longer than 5 weeks.

One woman said she did not know all that they offered but thought they could help with employment; job searches and offer voluntary opportunities that vary in length so that people who want to volunteer for a couple of hours for example can do so. Finally, a woman on the healthy relationships programme said that it would be useful if they identified what 'abuse' actually is as it was raised but, in her view, not fully covered.

5.10 Summary

Overall, there were a range of perspectives on the value of the OOC at The Good Loaf with women highlighting important benefits for themselves from engaging with and completing programmes. There were, however, important developmental areas identified which would further strengthen the programmes available to support the intended outcomes of the OOC.

Women were asked about whether the police described the Out of Court Disposal Option to them and what would happen next. In most cases women said that it had been explained to them. However, some women were not sure if it had been explained fully by the police and some felt misinformed by the police as to the content and format of the programme.

A high proportion of women were very positive about The Good Loaf programmes with nearly three quarters categorising it as very useful or useful in meeting their needs. When asked what improvements could be made a high proportion said 'none', but instead gave very positive comments about the programme. However, the main theme of suggested improvements was increasing the relevancy of programmes to the reason for the referral so that they are addressing reasons for the offending behaviour. Other suggested improvements included the provision of one-to-one work due to discomfort of some within the group setting, follow-up after the programmes have finished and improving engagement in groups by for example restricting mobile phone use.

6 Conclusion and Recommendations

This evaluation, like the previous evaluation, *shows that on average women experienced an improvement in their resilience, wellbeing and self-esteem measures pre to post intervention for all the programmes provided by The Good Loaf*. Although, causality is not proven this is a positive result, particularly when taken in combination with women's testimonies about how the programme has helped them. However, positive changes were not seen for all women, and it was highlighted in the interim report that it is perhaps an unrealistic and inappropriate measure of success to expect that all women's scores on these measures will increase particularly as some of the cohort did not have low scores to begin with. In this report analysis was conducted to compare the average change in pre and post scores dependent on the women's starting point and it has demonstrated that the programmes are particularly effective for those who initially score low on self-esteem, resilience and wellbeing measures. This highlights that the programmes have the most efficacy for those women who need to improve their resilience, self-esteem and wellbeing. Previous reporting of the overall average change has to some extent masked the particular benefit of the programme to these women.

This two-year evaluation period has seen a reduction in the use of The Good Loaf as an Out of Court Disposal Option by Northamptonshire Police with numbers in the second year consisting of less than 30% of the entire sample and with this two-year period seeing a reduction in its use compared to the previous evaluation period, April 2019-March 21, which was influenced largely by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The recently published Female Offender Strategy Delivery Plan (January 2023) reiterates the ambitions of the Female Offender Strategy (2018) to see fewer women entering the CJS and more women being successfully managed in the Community with more interventions tailored to the specific needs of women. One of the commitments to achieving this is to *'review the use of Out of Court Disposal Options in responding to the particular needs of women, including opportunities to attach women specific conditions such as referral to a women's centre for support to address her needs'* (MOJ, 2023 p.14).

Recommendation: In this context it is important that the decreased utilisation of The Good Loaf as an Out of Court Disposal Option for women is explored and establishing what the reasons for its decline are so that they can be addressed.

The process data and feedback from women suggests that allocation of women to programmes may not be addressing the issues which led to their offending behaviour. The allotment of women to programmes appears to be more strongly related to the time-period women were referred, with the wellbeing programme being more prominent in the first year of the evaluation and the work programme being more prominent in the second year. In addition, analysis of the offences that women indicated that they had committed in the pre surveys suggests that there were a high number of cases where the offence involved their children either in terms of neglect, being drunk in charge of a child or having an altercation with their child. In these cases, women were referred to either the wellbeing programme or the work programme. The numbers being referred to The Good Loaf means that it may be difficult to provide women with an appropriate programme in a group setting in women's mandated time to complete the OOC. In their evaluation of a Revised Conditional Cautioning Framework in Northumbria, Rowe *et al.* (2022) identified resourcing as a key challenge for pathway providers partly due to lower than anticipated referrals, which restricted the range of programmes and opportunities that could be offered. It is also worthy of note that in this evaluation two women spoke of alcohol issues, one of which felt alcohol was her primary issue and did not have a post survey and the other had referred themselves to AA and credits the combination of the two interventions as the reason she was able to turn her life around. She noted that her alcohol issue was

not picked up in Custody and she felt that they assumed that it was a domestic abuse issue. These cases could suggest that more focus is needed on identifying substance misuse issues prior to referral.

It is important that the police and The Good Loaf work together to ensure that relevant interventions are available to tackle the root causes of the issues that led women to their offence. It also may be beneficial to conduct a wider piece of work around all the conditional cautions that are available, mapping what needs they are addressing, where there may be overlaps or gaps, how women's needs are being assessed and whether the needs assessment process and decision making at the point of referral means that women are being allocated to the most appropriate conditional caution to meet their needs.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the processes by which women are assigned to specific OOCN providers based on individual needs is reviewed as well as the processes to identify the *right* intervention/support by providers allocated.

Recommendation: It would be beneficial to complete a strategic needs assessment that maps the needs of the women and the service provision landscape to identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities to address underlying causes of offending behaviours.

As with the previous evaluation although most women said that the police had explained what the OOCN to The Good Loaf was, other women were not sure if this explanation was clear due to being in a highly distressed state or said that they had felt misinformed about what it was. A couple of women also expressed that they felt they had been mistreated by the police.

Recommendation: It would be valuable that the police review the information women are given regarding the OOCN and how and when that information is delivered, so they fully understand what they are agreeing to. In addition, women need to be provided information about how they can make a complaint about the police if they feel that they have been mistreated.

A high proportion of women (49%) self-reported that they have a mental health issue. This compares to data from the population in England that suggests that about 1 in 6 people report experiencing a common mental health problem (like anxiety and depression) in any given week (McManus *et al.* 2016). Addressing mental health needs was a clearly identified need prior to Covid-19 by The Good Loaf and they had begun some staff training and a mental health programme. However, Covid-19 halted this progress. This coupled with the inability during Covid-19 to run the other programmes led The Good Loaf to accelerate the progression of this agenda so that they could meet the needs of the ladies coming through the OOCN route by creating the wellbeing programme.

Given the high proportion of women with self-identified mental health need and the recent reduction in use of the wellbeing programme in favour of the work programme, it may be beneficial for The Good Loaf to review how mental health issues are being supported in the cohort. The Good Loaf created the wellbeing programme because of identifying the need for mental health support but also to be able to deliver a programme that did not rely on external organisations during Covid-19. Therefore, given the change in circumstances post the Covid-19 pandemic, it may be beneficial to consider whether an external service with mental health expertise would be of benefit and/ or an increase in partnership working with mental health services to provide additional or ongoing support to these women. Particularly, as the time window that The Good Loaf have to offer support is very limited.

Recommendation: The availability of specific mental health support to women with mental health needs should be assessed.

Just under 1 in 5 women that completed pre-surveys classed themselves as having a learning disability, ADHD or Autistic Spectrum Disorder. In addition, one case in the process data was recorded as not having completed the pre-survey due to having learning difficulties. Significant work has been carried out in relation to neurodiversity and Mental Health Treatment Requirements and may be a useful resource in this context. In addition, data monitoring of women's neurodiverse needs will allow for a better understanding of whether engagement and outcomes for this cohort differ.

Recommendation: It is important that neurodiverse needs are considered both by the police when interacting with women at the point of referral and by The Good Loaf in terms of ensuring that engagement and outcomes can be maximised for this group.

As was the case in the first evaluation, some women found group work beneficial as they liked sharing experiences with others and gained comfort from feeling that they were not alone in their struggles. However, for others they found it difficult to relate to other women on the programme, finding it difficult or distressing to hear their stories and one participant specifically spoke about how they would have benefited from one-to-one work in addition to group work.

Recommendation: It may be beneficial for The Good Loaf to review access to one-to-one support or access to speaking on a one-to-one basis regarding any concerns or to reflect on discussions that they found difficult to comprehend and process in the group setting.

It would not be expected, or not necessarily intended, that all women that went on the OOCB at The Good Loaf would have continued contact with them on completing their required sessions. However, the responses from women show that some did intend to continue contact and receive further support through attending courses, volunteering or receiving support with issues such as accommodation. Additionally, comments suggest that women know that The Good Loaf is somewhere that they can return to in the future, if they are not quite in the right place yet to engage further. It is important to acknowledge that OOCB options provide providers such as The Good Loaf with only a short window to influence risk factors of women's offending behaviour that are often complex and long-standing. It has been highlighted by other research that there is a lack of long-term support for 'offenders' beyond that remit of the Out of Court Disposal (Rowe *et al.*, 2022).

Comments from women suggested that The Good Loaf had been proactive in encouraging women to engage with them beyond the OOCB with women commenting that they had discussed future courses or to come back as a volunteer. However, a couple of women suggested follow-up checks may be beneficial after women had left, this may be something that The Good Loaf could consider adding to their current process of being able to provide longer term support or signposting if needed.

There is evidence to suggest that Out of Court Disposals compared to court prosecution can be effective in reducing reoffending (Neyroud, 2018; Rowe *et al.*, 2022). This report does not provide reoffending data for The Good Loaf OOCB and therefore, this is an area that warrants future analysis. However, the evaluations of OOCB by The Good Loaf have been demonstrated to have important benefits for women in terms of building resilience, self-esteem and wellbeing. The provision and support offered by The Good Loaf is aligned with priorities set out in the Female Offender Strategy and therefore is central within the available female-specific pathways in Northamptonshire. The evidence presented in this report sets out areas to further strengthen this provision within Northamptonshire to benefit women with a strategic aim of reducing reoffending.

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Institute for
**Public Safety
Crime and Justice**

IPSCJ Point of Contact: Dr Matthew Callender

matthew.callender@northampton.ac.uk

@MattCallender1

IPSCJ Address:

Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice,
University of Northampton,
University Drive, Waterside Campus,
Northampton,
NN1 5PH
United Kingdom

IPSCJ Telephone:

+44 (0) 1604 89 3304

IPSCJ Email:

ipscj@northampton.ac.uk

Visit the IPSCJ Webpage:

<https://www.northampton.ac.uk/research/research-institutes/institute-for-public-safety-crime-and-justice>

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